

# Pain Clinic

www.painclinicplus.org.uk

Chronic Pain Support Group

## ***RELAXATION TECHNIQUES***

### **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) And Deep Breathing Exercises**

Disclaimer;

Whilst the following exercises are suitable for many people, you should ALWAYS consult your G.P. or Healthcare Professional before attempting any new exercise. Pain Clinic Plus accept no liability for any injury caused from the following exercises.

The original technique of PMR or progressive muscle relaxation was developed by Edmond Jacobson over 70 years ago.

There are many variations on this technique. You could try as follows or start from the end and work back- or even pick a few steps; it's really whatever works best for you.

Remember not to over tense muscles as this could increase your pain or increase damage to weak or already damaged muscles.

Relax for about 30 seconds between each step and feel how the tension has gone from each part of your body.

**No pain no gain is a myth- If you feel extra pain or discomfort – STOP.**

Start by finding a quiet comfortable location- sit on a comfortable chair or lie on a bed.

Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, expanding your belly as you inhale and contracting as you exhale

Inhale as you tense and exhale as you relax.

1. Beginning at your head, tense your forehead, hold for 5 seconds relax and exhale.
2. Squeeze your eyes shut, hold for 5 seconds and then relax.
3. Clench your jaws, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
4. With shoulders straight and relaxed, turn your head to the left as far as it will comfortably go, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
5. With shoulders straight and relaxed, turn your head to the right as far as it will comfortably go, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
6. Push your chin into your chest (gently), hold for 5 seconds then relax.
7. Lift your shoulders to your ears, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
8. Pull your shoulders back, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
9. Tense your arms (leave your hands 'floppy') hold for 5 seconds then relax.
10. Tense your fists, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
11. Stretch your fingers, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
12. Arch your back slightly, hold for 5 seconds then relax. (Care or omit if you have a spinal /back injury- contact your G.P.)
13. Pull in your stomach as far as possible, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
14. Push out your stomach as far as possible, hold for 5 seconds, then relax.
15. Tense your butt, hold for 5 seconds, then relax.
16. With your legs straight, raise them about 5 inches off the ground, hold for 5 seconds and relax. (Care or omit if you have a spinal /back injury- contact your G.P.)
17. With your legs straight, push your heels into the ground, hold for 5 seconds and relax. (Care or omit if you have a spinal /back injury- contact your G.P.)
18. Point your feet up as far as you can, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
19. Bend your toes up as far as you can, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
20. Bend your toes down as far as you can, hold for 5 seconds then relax.

*Now take a few minutes to enjoy your relaxed state of mind and feel how the tension has gone. Stand up slowly when you feel ready and maybe enjoy a glass of refreshingly cool water.*

Try this exercise twice a day, it may take you a few days to start feeling the benefit but don't give up! Experiment with the holding time, maybe reduce from 5 seconds to 2 seconds and gradually build up your comfortable holding time.

## Deep Breathing Exercises

### Breathing Awareness and Deep Breathing

Lie down (using a cushion to support your neck and head) or sit in a comfortable chair, maintaining good posture.

Your body should be relaxed as possible.

Close your eyes.

Scan your body for tension.

1. Pay attention to your breathing. Place one hand on the part of your chest or abdomen that seems to rise and fall the most with each breath. If this spot is on your chest you are not utilising the lower part of your lungs.
2. Place both hands on your abdomen and follow your breathing, noticing how your abdomen rises and falls.
3. Breathe through your nose.
4. Notice if your chest is moving in harmony with your abdomen.
5. Now place one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest.
6. Inhale deeply and slowly through your nose into your abdomen. You should feel your abdomen rise with this inhalation and your chest should only move a little.
7. Exhale through your mouth, keeping your mouth, tongue and jaw relaxed.
8. Relax as you focus on the sound and feeling of long, slow, deep breaths.



### Complete Natural Breathing

1. Sit or stand with good posture.
2. Breathe through your nose
3. Inhale, filling first the lower part of your lungs then the middle part, then the upper part.
4. Hold your breath for a few seconds.
5. Exhale slowly. Relax your abdomen and chest.

Practise these two exercises, in whatever combination feels best for you, for ten minutes, twice a day.

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## Chronic Pain Support Group

Is Based at the Ainsdale Centre for Health and Wellbeing  
164 Sandbrook Road, Woodvale,  
Southport. PR8 3RJ

“Run by pain sufferers for pain sufferers”

We are a voluntary group made up from chronic pain sufferers with close links to health professionals.

Our aim is to unite and support pain sufferers by way of monthly informal meetings, light exercise classes, talks and discussions.

Visit our website for lots of useful information!

**[www.painclinicplus.org.uk](http://www.painclinicplus.org.uk)**

Don't be shy or nervous! Please come along to our regular Friday morning meetings (between 10.00am and 12). You are assured a warm welcome and refreshments.

Remember, we all have one thing in common—**PAIN!**

If you have any questions please contact:

[www.painclinicplus.org.uk](http://www.painclinicplus.org.uk)

Compiled by Kevin Howard – Pain Clinic Plus. [www.painclinicplus.org.uk](http://www.painclinicplus.org.uk)

Acknowledgements:

Davis, Eshelman and McKay; The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.  
Edmund Jacobson.

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