



**Discussion Topic:**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

**Progressive muscular relaxation techniques**

# PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)



Anxiety and stress can create muscle tension. Learn to relax using PMR, where you create tension and release the different muscle groups of your body one at a time.

## HOW TO DO IT



- 1 Choose a quiet place and set aside about 15-20 minutes for this exercise.
- 2 You'll squeeze your muscles from the feet to your head: feet, legs, hands, arms, buttocks, stomach, chest, shoulders, neck, mouth, eyes, and forehead.
- 3 Focus on the first target muscle group. Take a slow, deep breath in and tense (squeeze) the muscle group, holding it for 6-10 seconds.
- 4 Focus on the difference between the tensed muscle and the relaxed muscle.
- 5 Relax for 10-20 seconds before moving onto the next muscle group.
- 6 Once you finish, count backwards from 5 to 1 to bring your focus back to the present.

Don't tense your muscles too hard! You shouldn't feel any pain or cramping during the exercise.

# What is progressive muscle relaxation?

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- Progressive muscle relaxation ([PMR](#)) is a deep relaxation technique
- PMR was created by American physician Edmund Jacobson in the 1920s. It was based on the theory that physical relaxation can promote mental relaxation.
- PMR provides a framework for achieving this state of relaxation. It requires you to work on one muscle group at a time. This allows you to notice the tension in that specific area.
- It's also essential to tense each muscle group *before* relaxing. This action emphasizes the sense of relaxation in the area.



# Benefits

- Reduces anxiety and tension
- Aids with management of fear
- Improves sleep
- Can ease pain – neck/back
- Can assist in reduction of high BP – systolic
- Decrease severity & frequency of tension

# What do I need to do ?

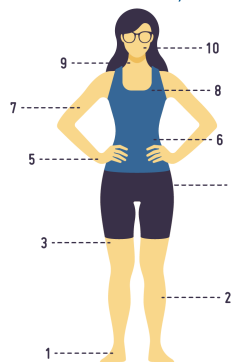
- Gently breathe in – hold – and let go.
- Gently pull your toes up towards your knees – just a little – hold briefly – and let go.
- Recognise the difference.
- Press your heels into the floor – hold – and let go.
- Pull your knees together – hold briefly – now let them drift apart a little. Be aware of the new position.
- Squeeze your buttocks together – hold – now let go.
- Gently pull in your tummy muscles towards your spine – hold briefly – now let go. Feel the difference.
- Shoulders – gently pull them up towards your ears, just enough to recognise the tension – hold briefly – now let go. Recognise the new position.
- Gently press your elbows and upper arms to the sides of your body – hold for a moment – now let go.
- Hands – gently clench – hold – and let go.
- Push your head forward slightly – hold briefly – now let your head go back to a balanced position. Feel the difference.
- Grit your teeth together – hold briefly – now let your jaw sag slightly. Feel the difference.
- Lips – press together – now let go until hardly touching. Purse your lips – now let go and feel the difference.
- Press your tongue briefly to the roof of your mouth – hold – and let it drop loosely. Feel the new position.
- Eyes – screw them up a little – hold – and let go.
- Forehead – frown a little – hold – now let go.

Now spend a few moments enjoying the feeling of release, releasing a little more with each exhale.











**RELAX YOUR MUSCLES GRADUALLY TO RELIEVE STRESS THIS MONDAY**

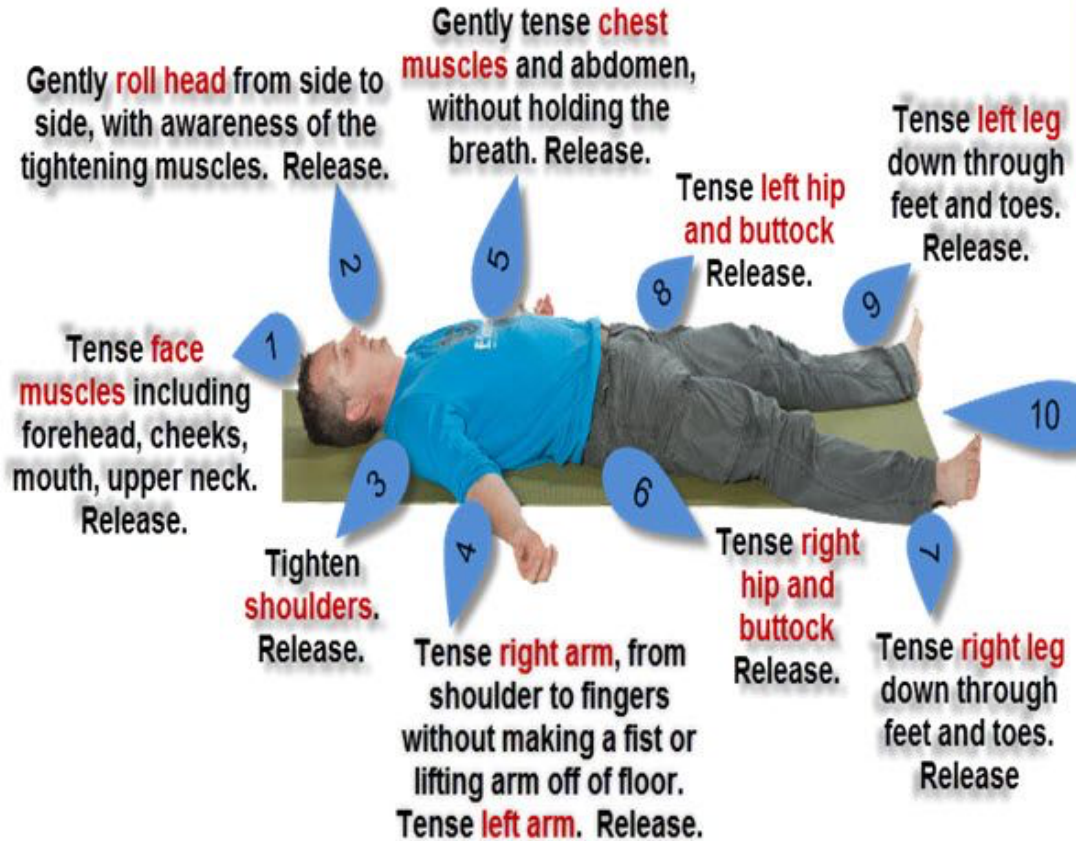
Progressive muscle relaxation helps you ease tension in every part of your body, one muscle group at a time. Tense up each muscle group for a few seconds, then release the tension and feel yourself let go.

A diagram of a woman's body with numbered points 1 through 10 indicating areas for progressive muscle relaxation. The points are: 1. Feet, 2. Lower legs, 3. Upper legs, 4. Hips, 5. Stomach, 6. Chest, 7. Neck, 8. Face, 9. Head, 10. Jaw.

**DE-STRESS MONDAY**

# PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

	Take 3 Deep Breaths
	Squeeze your foot for 5 seconds, Relax
	Squeeze your leg for 5 seconds, Relax
	Squeeze your stomach for 5 seconds, Relax
	Shrug your shoulders for 5 seconds, Relax
	Squeeze your arm & hand for 5 seconds, Relax
	Squeeze your whole body for 5 seconds, Relax
	Take 3 Deep Breaths



## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

# Tips for beginners



If you're new to relaxation techniques or PMR, consider these helpful tips:



Set aside 15 to 20 minutes for PMR. Do it in a quiet, comfortable area.



Turn off your phone to avoid distractions.



Avoid holding your breath, which can cause more tension. Inhale deeply when you tense your muscles and exhale fully when you relax.



Move in a sequence that works for you. For example, you can start at your head if you want to and move down your body.



Wear loose, lightweight clothing.



Practice PMR even when you're feeling calm, especially in the beginning. This will make it easier to learn the method.



# Guided PMR recordings

- Here's where you can find guided audio recordings:
  - [https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/content/uploads/2017/06/F\\_06\\_Progressive-Muscle-Relaxation.mp3](https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/content/uploads/2017/06/F_06_Progressive-Muscle-Relaxation.mp3)
  - YouTube: [https://youtu.be/ITiowly-\\_BU](https://youtu.be/ITiowly-_BU)
  - wellness or meditation podcasts
  - Mobile apps like [Headspace](#),