

Mini relaxations

Using the progressive muscle relaxation technique is a great way to gain deep relaxation.

Mini relaxations are similar to progressive muscle relaxation, but can be done much more quickly and easily. It's a good idea to practise both, so you can add them to your tool kit of strategies to help manage your pain.

A mini relaxation can be done in 30 seconds or less, and they can be done anywhere and at any time. This skill can be very helpful when you are feeling increased tension or pain by reversing the tension you feel and replacing it with a feeling of quiet relaxation.

Places you could try a mini relaxation:

- Sitting on public transport
- Sitting in a car
- At your desk at work
- While cooking
- While talking on the phone
- While eating or drinking
- Before going to sleep
- While sitting at a computer
- While in line at the supermarket

You should try beginning with 5 mini relaxations per day and then try building to 8.

To do a mini-relaxation, begin by stopping to focus on yourself.

Let go of as much tension as possible throughout your body.

Focus on relaxing the muscles in your stomach or diaphragm and breathe deeply. As you exhale slowly, say the word RELAX to yourself.

Place your arms and hands in a comfortable position. With your body as relaxed as it can be, take a slow, smooth, deep breath (3-5 seconds), pause or if you prefer, hold it (3-5 seconds) and exhale (3-5 seconds) This tells your body to quiet itself.

Now allow your body to breathe on its own and focus on relaxing your muscles.

Think of a relaxation "wave" flowing down across your forehead, your jaws, your neck and shoulders, your hands and arms, your midsection, legs, and feet. Feel the relaxation spreading down through your jaw.

Allow sensations of heaviness to flow downward throughout your shoulders, through your arms and hands, down into your stomach, and your legs and feet.

After 30 seconds, go about what you were doing—regardless of how well you have succeeded in relaxing.

