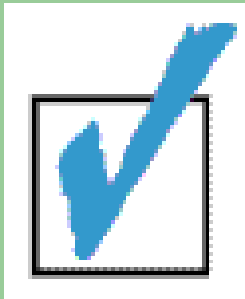


Tips for Relaxation of Stress Response

*Going for the 3 Increases: Increase in Health, Increase in
Happiness & Increase in Energy*

Strategies for
Success in Health
Management

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Progressive relaxation consists of:

1. Learning to relax:

You may have grown to accept a certain high level of stress and anxiety as normal. You may be unfamiliar with what it feels like to be relaxed, calm, and unstressed. With progressive relaxation

- You learn what it feels like to be relaxed
- You learn to increase relaxation to a new level.

By doing this you not only improve your physical well being by reducing hypertension, headaches, and other physical complaints, but you improve your mental state by reducing stress, anxiety, irritability, and depression.



Progressive relaxation consists of:

2. The physical setting:

- Progressive relaxation should take place in a quiet, attractive room
- You should be completely supported
- There should be no need for exertion to maintain body support
- You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing during the sessions



Progressive relaxation consists of:

3. The process:

- Lie on the floor or a bed and follow the directions of the relaxation technique which will be given to you.
- As you tense and relax various muscle groups, release the tension instantly and completely. This is very important in order to get the pendulum effect. The muscles relax beyond the point of their normal relaxed state.
- You should then feel the important difference between tension and relaxation. You should concentrate on the feeling of relaxation, learn what it is to relax and how to increase it. Continually repeat to yourself, “Know what it feels like to be relaxed, deepen the relaxation, know what it is to be relaxed.”



Do's and don'ts of relaxation:

Do: Make sure you have comfortable, loose clothing and proper back support

Don't: Put yourself in an awkward position or in a position that will make it easy to fall asleep

Do: Allow your mind to quiet down. If tense thoughts enter while you are relaxing, let them pass out of your head.

Don't: Think your way into tension. If you can't clear your mind, take a long, deep breath and let it out slowly.

Do: Stay alert and conscious while you are relaxing. Pay close attention and note any changes in your body (feelings that stand out for you).

Don't: Allow yourself to become groggy and sleepy. If you start falling asleep, open your eyes and sit up. When you are ready, return to relaxation posture.



Do's and don'ts of relaxation:

Do: Go at your own pace and let go of your muscles as your body decides to give up tension.

Don't: Expect yourself to relax all at once. Like any other physical exercise, you must practice letting go step by step.

Do: Give your body messages of appreciation for relaxing as you notice these feelings going through your body.

Don't: Get down on yourself for not relaxing. Your body should be trusted to go at its own pace.

Do: Stay aware of your breathing. Observe how much air you're taking in full breaths at regular rhythms.

Don't: Smoke before, during or after relaxation as it tightens lung tissue and blood vessels. Let your body breathe.



Relaxation training technique

- Record the directions in the Relaxation Technique Handout for yourself by reading them slowly. Use the tape daily to practice the relaxation response.
- Be ready to report on a weekly progress in your relaxation training efforts.



Also Practice Full Breathing

Use the Full Breathing Exercise Direction which has been given to you as often as it takes to get your breathing in line with your progressive relaxation training.



Don't Forget: Signs of Physical response to Stress

Stress results in increased:

- heart rate
- blood pressure, respiration
- perspiration
- pupil dilation
- muscle tension



Don't forget: What are results of chronic stress?

In the state of chronic stress there is chronically elevated:

- heart rate
- blood pressure
- respiration are chronically elevated

Common stress-related illnesses include:

- Coronary artery disease
- Peptic ulcer
- Mental illness



Don't forget: It is important to work on Your Relaxation Response

The signs of this relaxation physical response include decreased:

- heart rate
- blood pressure
- respiration
- pupil dilation
- muscle tension

It is important to daily use the stress-management strategy to evoke relaxation physical response