



# AcuBalance

Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine



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## **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is a technique for learning to control the state of tension in your muscles, with the ultimate goal of total body relaxation. The foundation of PMR is fairly straightforward, and it's very easy to learn. It involves the interplay of breath and the tension/release of muscle groups starting at the toes and ending with the face. PMR can help you become more mindful & aware of muscle tension and relaxation, and through that awareness you can elicit and maintain a continual state of physical relaxation.

The Basic Formula: Inhale + Tension / Exhale + Relaxation

### **We'll start experimenting with PMR with your fists...**

1. Bring your attention to your hands, try to make them as relaxed as possible.
2. Now, take a deep breath in and clench your fists as tight as possible and hold for 2-3 seconds
3. Let the breath out and release the contraction, allowing your fists to relax. Feel more relaxed?

### **Full PMR Session**

- ❖ Lie down comfortable on your back, legs slightly apart, arms at your side, and palms up.
- ❖ Close your eyes, and bring your awareness to your breath – breathe in the nose and out the mouth.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your feet**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and tense your toes as much as you can and hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your toes and feet completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your lower leg.**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and point your toes down and hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release
- ❖ Repeat but this time flex your feet
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your lower leg completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your upper leg (quads and hamstrings)**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and tense your thighs as much as you can; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your upper leg completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your glutes and hips**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and tense your glutes as much as you can; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.

- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your glutes and hips completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your lower back**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and arch your back, tensing the muscles of your lower back; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your lower back completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your stomach**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and arch your back, tensing the muscles of your stomach; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your stomach completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to the muscles of your chest, shoulder, and upper back**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and shrug your shoulders forward, tensing your shoulders and chest; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Repeat with pinching your shoulder blades together, and raising your shoulders to your ears.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your chest, shoulder, and upper back completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to your hands**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and clench your fists as tight as possible; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your hands completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to your wrists and forearms**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and flex your wrists upwards and then downwards; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your forearm completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to your upper arm**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and flex your upper arms; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your upper arm completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to your jaw**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and clench your jaws; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your jaws completely heavy and relaxed.

### **Bring your awareness to your face**

- ❖ Take a deep breath in and squeeze your mouth, nose, cheeks and eyes; hold for 2-3 seconds
- ❖ Breathe out and release.
- ❖ Visualize all the nerves, bones, tendons, and muscles of your face completely heavy and relaxed.

Now that you've reached the top, take a few more deep breaths in, notice your body feeling relaxed and heavy from head to toe. With every breath it becomes heavier and heavier, sinking into your bed and feel your body letting go of all tension and embracing the sense of complete relaxation.