

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

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ABSTRACT

Relaxation techniques can assist to deal with everyday stress and stress associated with various health problems. Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) may be a relaxation technique that includes tensing and then relaxing muscles. The benefits of this relaxation technique to relax body and mind from stress. PMR can be practiced twice in a day. There are various contra indications for this technique. The four steps of tension, relaxing the muscles, rest and return are used in this techniques where various muscle groups are involved. People with anxiety difficulties are often so tense throughout the day that they don't even recognize what being relaxed feels like. So PMR is the relaxation technique that can relieve stress.

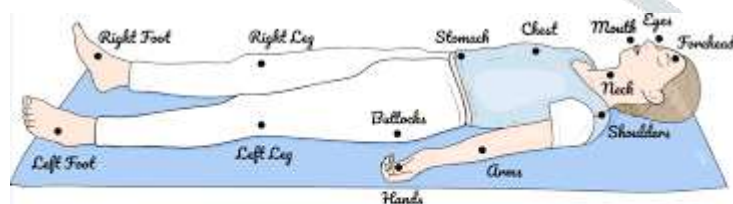
KEY WORDS: Relaxation technique, Progressive Muscle relaxation, Benefits, Contra indication

INTRODUCTION

Relaxation techniques are excellent solution to help with stress management. Relaxation is not only about mind's sanity or enjoying some hobby. Learning basic relaxation techniques is easy. Relaxation techniques are also often free or low cost, pose little risk, and may be done nearly anywhere. Relaxation techniques can assist to deal with everyday stress and with stress associated with various health problems, like heart conditions, fatigue and painⁱ.

DEFINITION

Relaxation technique is a method that decreases the effects of stress on your mind and body. Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) may be a relaxation technique that includes tensing and then relaxing muscles, one by one and it helps you release physical tension, which can ease stress and anxiety and associated disordersⁱⁱ



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BRIEF HISTORY OF PMR

Edmund Jacobson's interest during anxiety began in a bicycle shop fire on the side of Chicago in 1898. At the age of 10, he was struck by how his father, who was deeply impacted by the incident, changed from being a quiet man to being excitable."This unlikely event led Jacobson on a journey that lasted a lifetime to understand the way to treat excitability and nervousness. Seventeen years later, in 1905, while a Harvard University student, he discovered that deeply relaxed students weren't startled by sudden noises.

With response to his ongoing research, Jacobson developed a complex and effective technique for practitioners to monitor and release unwanted tension in clients (Mackereth & Tomlinson, 2010). Over the years, the technique has been adapted and, for practical reasons, shortened, but it remains faithful to the thought that physical relaxation features a positive effect on the mind (Wolpe, 1961). Abbreviated progressive muscle relaxation training combines the tensing and releasing of muscles, while that specializes in breathing to manage stress and anxietyⁱⁱⁱ.

BENEFITS OF PMR

Reduces anxiety and tension

Anxiety relief is one among the main benefits of PMR. This includes generalized anxiety disorder or anxiety due to a stressful situation. PMR reduced symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. At an equivalent time, it improved feelings of wellbeing and quality of life

. **Improves sleep** Because PMR induces relaxation, it may also help to get better sleep

. **Eases neck pain** If there is tension in neck or shoulders, there might be neck pain. It's a common condition that's often associated with mental and emotional stress. PMR may help reduce symptoms of chronic nonspecific neck pain. In doing so, it's going to also improve quality of life and physical function.

Reduces low back pain

Low back pain is another common condition. It has many potential causes, but stress can make it worse. PMR may help decrease chronic low back pain. PMR, accompanied by music, has the ability to decrease low back pain in pregnant women

. **Improves systolic blood pressure** Hypertension, or high vital sign, increases your risk for heart condition and stroke. Stress can worsen the condition, but PMR may help. PMR with music therapy improved systolic blood pressure in older adults but it didn't seem to have an effect on diastolic blood pressure.

Decreases the frequency of migraine attacks

Migraine may be a neurological condition that causes intense pain in your face and head. Migraine attacks can be triggered by stress, including normal everyday stressors. PMR can decrease the frequency of migraine episodes.

Reduces temporomandibular joint (TMJ) symptoms

Emotional stress can cause temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorder, a condition that results in stiffness and locking of the jaw. The calming effect of PMR may help reduce Temporomandibular joint symptomsⁱⁱ

PREPARATION

Set aside 15 minutes.

Find somewhere quiet and comfortable and where won't be disturbed.

Remove your shoes and wear loose clothing.

Perform PMR twice a day while feeling calm.

Going forward, follow the steps once each day,

three to fourfold every week , or as required .

Consult doctor before performing PMR if there is any underlying medical conditions that hinder physical activity.

Do not perform PMR if there is broken bones or pulled muscles

The table below contains an inventory of muscle groups to figure through at each session (modified from the Health Library at the University of Michigan Medicine):

Muscle group	Action
Hands	Clench/make a fist.
Wrists and forearms	Extend and bend hands back at the wrist.
Biceps and upper arms	Make a fist and bend arms at the elbows, flexing biceps.
Shoulders	Shrug them (raise them toward ears).
Forehead	Wrinkle into a deep frown.
Around the eyes and bridge of the nose	Close your eyes as tightly as possible while remaining comfortable (preferably remove contact lenses before start.)
Cheeks and jaws	Smile as widely as can.
Around the mouth	Press lips together tightly. Check face for tension.
Back of the neck	Press the back of head against support (chair headrest or the floor.)
Front of the neck	Touch chin to chest, but avoid creating tension in neck and head.
Chest	Take a deep breath and hold it for 5 to 10 seconds.
Back	Arch back up and away from the floor or chair.
Stomach	Suck into a tight knot. (Check chest and stomach for tension.)
Hips and buttocks	Press buttocks together tightly.
Thighs	Clench them hard.

Muscle group	Action
Lower legs	Point toes toward face. Then point toes away and curl them downward at the same time.

. PROCEDURE

Before begin, take five slow, deep breaths.

Step one: Tension

- As breathe in, deliberately and gently tense the first muscle group as hard as can be.
 - The tension is felt in the muscles.
 - It may cause some discomfort or shaking but not pain.
 - The muscle group that are targeted alone to be tensed.
- Hold for five to ten seconds.

Step two: Relax the muscles

- Then while exhale, quickly and fully relax the tensed muscles.
- Focus on the changing sensations. If it helps, picture feelings of stress leaving the body.
- Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

The muscles become loose and limp.

Step three: Rest

- Take 10–20 seconds and relax.
- Repeat steps one, two, and three, tensing and relaxing each of the muscle groups listed in the table below.

Step four: Return

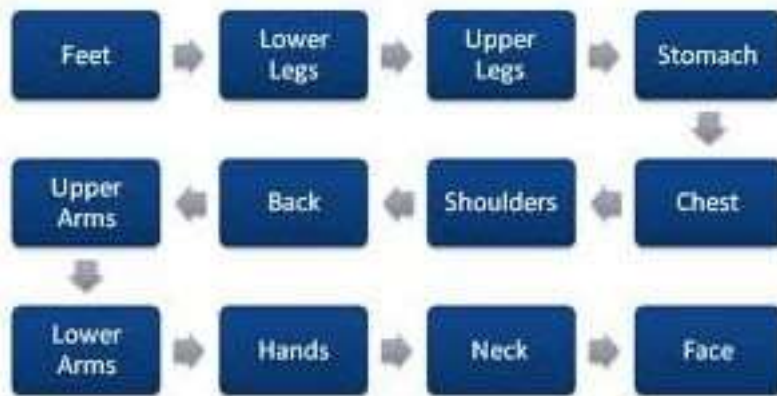
- When finished, count backward from five to one, and return focus to the present.
- Enjoy the feelings of deep relaxation.

It will take time to learn to use PMR successfully. And, initially, it may feel uncomfortable and require considerable effort and focus.

As become more practiced, will become fully aware of the difference between tensed and relaxed muscles, and it will feel more enjoyable.

Ongoing, the skill will become an effective way of managing anxiety^{iii,iv,v,vi,vii,viii}.

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CAUTIONS/CONTRAINDICATIONS – RELAXATION

It is best to be cautious when dealing with stress, so no one should diagnose themselves as suffering from stress but see physician to get an accurate diagnosis because there are some medical conditions whose symptoms are similar to those of stress and if this is so the medical conditions need treating.

- Do not drive or operate machinery straight after practicing relaxation.
- Do not practice relaxation whilst driving or doing any other activity that requires concentration.
- Do not practice relaxation on a full stomach.
- Do not cross arms and legs.
- If have any form of chronic medical or psychological health problem check with doctor that relaxation is suitable for particular condition.
- Do not practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation (tense/release) if have High blood pressure or other cardiovascular problems.

- Never practice relaxation to treat undiagnosed symptoms; always see Doctor for an accurate diagnosis.
- If find any uncomfortable symptoms while practicing relaxation discuss these with Doctor.
- A few people may experience new sensations such as a feeling of floating, if this worries present just stop the relaxation and bring consciousness back and the symptom will resolve.
- In some individuals relaxation techniques may enhance the action of certain drugs. Let doctor know about regularity in practicing relaxation techniques, in case he/she wants to monitor dosage of anti-anxiety, anti-hypertensive or other medications history can be collected
- Do not stand up straightaway after practicing relaxation, remain seated or lying down for a few minutes with eyes open then get up.
- It is advisable that people who are suffering schizophrenia do not practice relaxation techniques unless advised that they can by their qualified medical practitioner^{ix}.



TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

If novice to relaxation techniques or PMR, consider these helpful tips:

- Set aside 15 to 20 minutes for PMR perform it in a quiet, comfortable area.
- Turn off cell phone to avoid distractions.
- Not to hold breath, that can cause more tension. Inhale deep and tense muscles and exhale fully when relax.
- Move in a sequence. , start at head if want to, and move down to body.
- Wear loose, lightweight garments.
- Practice PMR even when feeling calm, especially in the starting period. This will make it easy to learn the techniqueⁱⁱ

SUMMARY

Progressive muscles relaxation is a deep relaxation technique that has been used to relieve stress, anxiety and chronic pain. Progressive Muscle Relaxation deals with how to relax muscles through a two step process. First, systematically tense required muscle groups in body, such as neck and shoulders. Next, release the tension and notice how muscles feel when you relax them. This exercise will help to lower overall tension and stress levels, and help to relax anxiety. It can also help to reduce physical problems such as stomach aches and headaches, as well as improve sleep. People with anxiety difficulties are often so tense throughout the day that they don't even recognize what being relaxed feels like^{xxi}.

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