

Stop Smoking Service

Relaxation Tips

Relaxation is a useful tool to help you handle stress effectively.

- Deep breathing. Breathe in for a count of 4 and out for a count of 4, concentrating on the out breath.
- Lying on the floor on your back, hands by your sides slowly raise both arms together while breathing in for a count of 7, then lowering them for a count of 14 while breathing out.
- Have a relaxing bubble bath.
- Go for a walk.
- Talk to a friend.
- Regular exercise, e.g. yoga, running.
- Take up a hobby you enjoy / make time for yourself.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise

Can be done sitting on a chair or lying on the floor

Hands and Arms

Clench fists, tense arms. Feel the tightness in your hands and arms then slowly relax them. Let them go as much as you can.

Shoulders

Hunch up shoulders then gradually let them settle down.

Forehead

Make a frown by pulling your eyebrows together then gradually let your forehead smooth out.

Eyes

Screw your eyes up tight then let them smooth out, keeping your eyes closed, feeling your eyeballs sink and your eyelids droop. Let them get really heavy.

Jaw

Clench your teeth together then gradually let go, letting your jaw get slack with your tongue resting at the bottom of your mouth.

Back of Neck

Push your chin forward onto your chest, feeling the tightness then relax.

Front of Neck

Push your head back, feeling the tightness then relax.

Breath

Concentrate on breathing slowly and evenly, letting go when you breathe out.

Stomach

Pull in your stomach as much as you can, then relax.

Thighs

Push your heels down hard on the floor feeling the tightness, and then let go.

Calves

Point your toes feeling the tightness in your calf muscles, then let go. It may help you to imagine a colour, image or scene such as lying by a river on a quiet summer afternoon. Continue to lie and relax for 5 or 10 minutes. Remember to practice your relaxation techniques. It is a skill that needs to be learned over time, so be patient with yourself. Try and set aside time for relaxation and don't give up.