



# Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation helps you release physical stress by tightening and relaxing different muscle groups in a systematic way. It is especially helpful for anxiety, chronic stress, sleep problems, trauma symptoms, and tension-related pain.

## Before You Begin

- Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lie down.
- Loosen any tight clothing if possible.
- Take a few slow, deep breaths to settle into your body.
- Move at a gentle pace—nothing should feel painful.

## For each muscle group below:

**Tense** the muscle group firmly—but not to the point of pain—for **5–7 seconds**.

**Release** the tension suddenly and completely.

**Notice** the warm, loose, heavy feeling as the muscle relaxes.

## Move through the sequence:

1. Hands & Forearms: Make a tight fist. Hold... and release.
2. Upper Arms: Bend your elbows and tighten your biceps. Hold... and release.
3. Shoulders: Shrug your shoulders toward your ears. Hold... and release.
4. Neck: Gently press your head back as if leaning into a pillow. Hold... and release.
5. Face: Squeeze eyes shut, wrinkle your nose, tighten your jaw. Hold... and release.
6. Chest: Take a deep breath and tighten your chest muscles. Hold... and release.
7. Stomach: Pull your belly inward as if bracing. Hold... and release.
8. Lower Back & Hips: Gently arch your lower back (or tighten glutes if lying down). Hold... and release.
9. Thighs: Tighten your thighs or press your legs together firmly. Hold... and release.
10. Calves: Point your toes upward toward your face. Hold... and release.
11. Feet: Curl your toes downward. Hold... and release.

## After Completing PMR

Take 2–3 slow breaths and notice:

- How relaxed your muscles feel
- Where tension has decreased
- Any areas that feel lighter or looser
- Sensations of warmth, heaviness, or softening in the body

Allow yourself a moment to enjoy the calm you created.

## Helpful Reminders

- Practice daily for 5–10 minutes to build skill.
- Move slowly and intentionally through each muscle group.
- If any movement causes discomfort, skip that area.