



## Progressive Relaxation for Body and Mind

Here's a great way to reset your body-mind connection. This is my favorite mind-body relaxation technique because it makes you more aware of the tension level in each part of your body and teaches you to shift your brain's directive from tension to relaxation using very precise control. As you relax your muscles, you'll enable background tension to dissipate as well.

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**Step 1:** Find a quiet, comfortable place to lie down.

**Step 2:** Close your eyes and let all the tension melt from your body. Begin focusing on the toes of your left foot. Sense the level of tension, and then slowly relax every fiber in those toes, allowing the tension to flow out of you until it's completely gone. Now shift your attention from your toes to your foot, and repeat. Continue in the following progression:

left toes > left foot > left calf > left thigh > left hip > right toes > right foot > right calf > right thigh > right hip > buttocks > belly > lower back > chest > left fingers > left hand > left forearm > left upper arm > left shoulder > right fingers > right hand > right forearm > right upper arm > right shoulder > upper back > neck > face > scalp

Finally, let the last bit of tension escape from the top of your head.

**Step 3:** Spend a few minutes absorbing this new state of relaxation. As you go about your day, notice if tension begins to creep into certain areas. If it does, stop what you're doing as soon as possible and relax those areas using an abbreviated version of the technique above. This will help prevent areas of tension from becoming stress reinforcers and stave off musculoskeletal dysfunction.