

# Stress Reduction: Muscle Relaxation

Did you know our body responds to stress with muscle tension? When we are stressed our bodies become tense, often without us knowing it. Muscle relaxation exercises are a good way to relieve built-up tension, and by relaxing our bodies we are sending a signal to our brain to also refocus.

## How Can We Reduce Stress Through Muscle Relaxation?

The purpose of muscle relaxation is to reduce muscle tension and mental stress, allowing your mind and body to relax. It is a good technique if you feel worried about a lot of things, and experience physical symptoms of anxiety such as backache and sore muscles.

## How To Do Muscle Relaxation

- Start by slowing down your breathing.
- When you start, start with each muscle group in turn - legs, arms, glutes, back, stomach, neck, face and forehead - and tense each muscle group and hold for 5 seconds.
- When you are tensing the muscles, make sure you can feel the tension but not so much that you feel a lot of pain.
- Relax the muscle group for 5 seconds.
- When you have finished the procedure, remain seated for a few moments, allowing yourself to become more alert.

