**progressive muscle relaxation**

**Overview**

Jacobson’s relaxation technique is a type of therapy that focuses on tightening and relaxing specific muscle groups in sequence. It’s also known as progressive relaxation therapy. By concentrating on specific areas and tensing and then relaxing them, you can become more aware of your body and physical sensations.

Dr. Edmund Jacobson invented the technique in the 1920s as a way to help his patients deal with anxiety. Dr. Jacobson felt that relaxing the muscles could relax the mind as well. The technique involves tightening one muscle group while keeping the rest of the body relaxed, and then releasing the tension.

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is a stress-management mindfulness technique. PMR can help relieve the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety, such as tight, aching muscles, by systematically tensing and releasing certain muscle groups in your body.

To begin PMR, sit or lie down in a comfortable position and breathe slowly. Start with your toes and feet, then squeeze the muscles tightly as you inhale. Count to 5, then relax your muscles as you exhale. Repeat 2 more times. Then do the same for all the other muscles in your body, progressing through your legs, stomach, arms, shoulders, and neck. If you prefer, you can also start with the muscle groups at the top of your body and work your way down. The idea is to “progress” either up or down your body. The outcome: You can train your body to relax on command.

How progressive muscle relaxation can help you manage stress and optimize performance

It’s easy to think your responses to stress (such as rapid heartbeat, sweat, and anxiety) are something you want to avoid altogether. But the energy you gain from stress [**can be a valuable tool**](https://www.hprc-online.org/mental-fitness/sleep-stress/make-stress-good-you) to help you perform. Unfortunately, sometimes your stress can go on overdrive and be activated for too long or at too high of an intensity than you need for a specific mission-essential task on the battlefield or at home.

***Progressive muscle relaxation can help you pump the brakes on your stress response when it’s on overdrive, address (and control) the physical symptoms of stress, and improve your performance.***

[https://youtu.beGive it a try!](https://youtu.be/TaDb7NR6hBo" \t "_blank)

[Use this video to practice a short, 10-minute progressive muscle relaxation exercise.](https://youtu.be/TaDb7NR6hBo" \t "_blank)

[/TaDb7NR6hBo](https://youtu.be/TaDb7NR6hBo" \t "_blank)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaDb7NR6hBo

How to optimize performance by practicing progressive muscle relaxation

At first, PMR might feel weird or uncomfortable. Like any skill, the benefits come with regular practice. Pick a time when you can practice it each day, for example before bed, at lunch, or when you first wake up.

Reference :

<https://www.hprc-online.org/social-fitness/family-optimization/everything-you-need-know-about-progressive-muscle-relaxation>

https://www.healthline.com/health/what-is-jacobson-relaxation-technique

