



[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Biofeedback

URL of this page: [//medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002241.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002241.htm)

Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a technique that measures bodily functions and gives you information about them in order to help train you to control them.

Information

Biofeedback is most often based on measurements of:

- Blood pressure
- Brain waves (EEG)
- Breathing
- Heart rate
- Muscle tension
- Skin conductivity of electricity
- Skin temperature

By watching these measurements, you can learn how to change these functions by relaxing or by holding pleasant images in your mind.

Patches, called electrodes, are placed on different parts of your body. They measure your heart rate, blood pressure, or other bodily function. A monitor displays the results. A tone or other sound may be used to let you know when you have reached a goal or certain state.

Your health care provider will describe a situation and guide you through relaxation techniques. The monitor lets you see how your heart rate and blood pressure change in response to being stressed or remaining relaxed.

Biofeedback teaches you how to control and change these bodily functions. By doing so, you feel more relaxed or more able to cause specific muscle relaxation processes. This may help treat conditions such as:

- Anxiety and insomnia
- Constipation
- Tension and migraine headaches
- Urinary incontinence
- Pain disorders such as headache or fibromyalgia

- Alcoholism and other substance use disorders

References

Hecht FM. Complementary and integrative medicine. In: Goldman L, Cooney KA, eds. *Goldman-Cecil Medicine*. 27th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2024:chap 30.

Hosey M, McWhorter JW, Wegener ST. Psychologic interventions for chronic pain. In: Benzon HT, Raja SN, Liu SS, Fishman SM, Cohen SP, eds. *Essentials of Pain Medicine*. 4th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2018:chap 59.

White JD. Complementary and alternative medicine. In: Niederhuber JE, Armitage JO, Kastan MB, Doroshow JH, Tepper JE, eds. *Abeloff's Clinical Oncology*. 6th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2020:chap 31.

Review Date 12/31/2023

Updated by: Joseph V. Campellone, MD, Department of Neurology, Cooper Medical School at Rowan University, Camden, NJ. Review provided by VeriMed Healthcare Network. Also reviewed by David C. Dugdale, MD, Medical Director, Brenda Conaway, Editorial Director, and the A.D.A.M. Editorial team.

Learn how to cite this page



Health Content
Provider
06/01/2028

A.D.A.M., Inc. is accredited by [URAC](http://www.urac.org), for Health Content Provider (www.urac.org). URAC's [accreditation program](#) is an independent audit to verify that A.D.A.M. follows rigorous standards of quality and accountability. A.D.A.M. is among the first to achieve this important distinction for online health information and services. Learn more about A.D.A.M.'s [editorial policy](#), [editorial process](#), and [privacy policy](#).

The information provided herein should not be used during any medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. A licensed medical professional should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions. Links to other sites are provided for information only – they do not constitute endorsements of those other sites. No warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, is made as to the accuracy, reliability, timeliness, or correctness of any translations made by a third-party service of the information provided herein into any other language. © 1997-2025 A.D.A.M., a business unit of Ebix, Inc. Any duplication or distribution of the information contained herein is strictly prohibited.



National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health