

Calming Techniques

Everyone feels anxious sometimes and the result can be headaches, stomach upset, a racing heartbeat or feeling miserably tense. Especially now, you want to calm down — but how?

For ongoing anxiety, learning and practicing yoga and meditation can help. There are also calming techniques to soothe anxious feelings while you're on the go. No matter how much or little time they require, these stress-soothing strategies can produce a similar effect. They spark the body's natural relaxation response, slowing breathing and heart rate, controlling blood pressure and promoting a sense of well-being.

Tips for going from frazzled to calm:

- * **Focus on your breathing.** Take long, deep breaths, inhaling into your abdomen. Exhale slowly and repeat several times.
- * **Silently repeat a calming phrase.** Some people use a short prayer, mantra, or a soothing phrase such as “All is well” or “I am fine.”
- * **Mentally scan your body.** While anxiously waiting for a meeting, breathe slowly as you focus on 1 part of your body at a time. Consciously relax your muscles, mentally releasing any tension you feel there.
- * **Tell yourself,** “I can do this.”

Anxiety is treatable. Talk to your health care provider about other lifestyle measures, medication and teletherapy.

In these ever-changing times, try progressive muscle relaxation

to ease body and mind. While lying down or sitting in a comfortable chair, tighten each muscle group in your body one at a time; hold for 10 seconds and then slowly release. Start with your feet and ankles, move up to your lower legs and thighs, and then reach your abdominals, arms, shoulders and face.