

## **Jamison: Patient Education and Wellness**

### **HANDOUT 14.7: STRATEGIES FOR MUSCLE RELAXATION**

Perform one or more of the following and notice the decrease in tension as you relax.

- ☐ Stretching. Stretch tall and wide like a cat
- ☐ Shoulder–arm relaxation:
  - let your arms hang loosely by your sides
  - rotate each arm – start with the hands and extend up the shoulder
  - allow your arms to swing loosely
- ☐ Alternate tension–relaxation exercises:
  - tense a group of muscles, e.g. neck and shoulder
  - hold for 5–10 seconds
  - relaxRepeat the procedure a few times
- ☐ Isometric tension-reliever exercises:
  - push against an immovable object
  - restRepeat the procedure
- ☐ Rotation exercises:
  - rotate your shoulders
  - roll your head
- ☐ Muscle loosening:
  - become aware of any tense muscle
  - deliberately loosen or relax them
- ☐ Jogging in place:
  - run on the spot for 3 minutes
- ☐ Walking:
  - take a 5-minute walk
- ☐ Soothing muscle stimulation. Relaxation and blood flow are increased by:
  - massaging
  - slapping muscles
- ☐ Progressive deep muscle relaxation

Progressive deep muscle relaxation requires roomy clothing and a quiet comfortable location where you can be undisturbed for 15 to 30 minutes. The stages in progressive deep relaxation draw from techniques previously discussed. They involve:

- lying down in a comfortable position
- starting from the toes and moving up to the head:
  - stretching and tightening muscles
  - releasing and relaxing muscles
- scanning the body mentally to identify:
  - areas of muscle tension that need particular attention
  - breathing patterns and implementing diaphragmatic breathing if necessary

- mental distractions and letting them go
- becoming aware of an inner peacefulness
- slowly stretching and returning to the present

See also

<http://www.webmd.com/video/ornish-tranquil-senses>

<http://www.webmd.com/video/ornish-align-breath>