

# PROGRESSIVE MUSCULAR RELAXATION

## What is PMR?

PMR is Progressive Muscular Relaxation. The aim of PMR is to tense and relax muscles working your way from your feet through to your head. The contrast of tensed and relaxed creates a unique relaxation experience.

## How to do PMR

PMR can take anywhere from 5 to 25 minutes depending on how specific you focus on the key muscles or muscle groups. A step-by-step guide is:

1. Get comfortable in a sitting or lying position
2. Focus on long, slow, deep breathes for a few minutes
3. Progressive relaxation
  - a. Hold specific muscles, or muscle groups, as tight as possible for 5 seconds and then relax these muscles.
  - b. Work your way up your body muscle-by-muscle from your feet to your head.
  - c. Progress either muscle-by-muscle or by muscle group. For example:
    - i. Feet, calves, quads, hamstrings, gluts, core etc to jaw and eye muscles.
    - ii. Feet, low leg, upper leg, core, chest, arms, neck, face.
    - iii. Left foot-leg, right foot-leg, core-torso, left hand-arm, right hand-arm, face-neck-shoulders.
  - d. Always maintain your constant relaxing breathing.
  - e. Allow up to 5-10 deep breathes between each muscle tensing and the next muscle.
  - f. Focus on the difference between the tight, tense muscles and the relaxed, loose muscles.
4. After working your way through you body continue long, slow, deep breathes for a few minutes.
5. Open your eyes when you're ready and comfortable.

## When to use PMR?

PMR can be used at a variety of different times. The aim of PMR is generally to relax your body and clear your mind of thoughts. Therefore the best time to use PMR may be:

- Night before competition
- Morning of competition
- On the way to competition
- After training
- Any time you're feeling stressed or a bit anxious/nervous