

Using Meditation for Headache Relief

Learning how you can consciously relax your body can help you release the physical effects of stress and reduce the intensity of your headache. It also allows you to become more aware of the sensations in your body and learn to change the response to the feeling of discomfort or pain.

Find a comfortable posture

Get into a comfortable, seated position, or lie down if possible. If you've chosen to sit, lengthen your spine so there is a straight line between the base of your spine and the crown of your head. A straight back chair or support from a pillow along your back can be helpful in positioning. In other words, no slouching. Roll your shoulders a few times, and let your shoulders slide down your back, like your tucking them into a pocket.

Take Deep Breaths

Now close your eyes and take 10 deep breaths. You can count the inhales and exhales if you like. Breath in slowly, pause at the top and slowly exhale. Concentrate on making each of your exhales longer than the inhale. (For example- breathe in for a count of 3 and exhale for a count of 4). Pause at the end of your exhale before taking the next breath in. Every time you breathe out, try to relax as deeply as you can.

Scan Your Skull for Tension Points

While holding your body still, shift your focus upward towards the crown of your head. Start seeking out the various points of tension in your skull. Whenever you find a point that feels tight, start to imagine that area of sensation as a color. With each exhale, imagine the color fading until it is no longer present. Now begin working through the crown of your head as you systematically release the tension as you scan your skull.

Once the top of your head feels softer and more relaxed than before, use the same technique to release the tension in your eyes, forehead, jaw, etc.

Scan Your Body

Once you've finished scanning your head, scan downwards towards your neck and shoulders for individual tension points/ start imagining the tension fading and softening as you shift your focus through your body. Continue this through the rest of your body: Torso, arms and hands, legs and feet.

Focus on the Sound of your breath

When you finish relaxing your body mentally, now you can focus on calming your mind. Do this by redirecting your attention to the sound of your breath for about 2 to 3 minutes. If your mind starts to wander elsewhere, label the thoughts as "thinking" and allow them to pass through. Focus instead on the sound of your breath.