

Different ways to meditate



You can use different ways to meditate to help your body relax and control stress.

Find a place that is safe, quiet, and comfortable and try one or all of these.

Mantra or positive affirmation

- Choose a mantra. This is a sound, word, or a phrase to help focus your attention. Speak this aloud or in your head. Some examples are: “So-hum,” “I am at peace,” “Today I will be patient,” or “Today I will be kind.”
- Breathe in slowly and imagine that you hear or think your mantra “so-hum” or the word or phrase you chose. Breathe slowly out, again say your chosen mantra. Repeat for 10-12 breaths or longer.
- Try to alternate how you say your mantra. Say aloud for 10-12 breaths. Whisper for 10-12 breaths. Say in your mind for 10-12 breaths. Whisper for 10-12 breaths. Say aloud for 10-12 breaths.

Body scan and progressive relaxation

“Scan” your body by being aware of how each area of your body feels. Progressively relax each area. Start with your head and end at your feet.

- Close your eyes. Start at your forehead, notice how it feels. Relax your forehead.
- Next, move to your eyes, notice how they feel. Relax your eyes.
- Continue to your face, neck, jaw, shoulders, chest, upper arms, lower arms, hands, fingers, stomach, hips, upper legs, lower legs, and feet. Notice each area and then relax that area.
- You can add progressive relaxation to your body scan by flexing the muscles of each area of your body. Notice the sensation of the flexed muscle and then relax that part of the body. Start from your head and end at your feet.

Guided imagery

This helps you to picture a place in your mind so that you can focus and relax.

- Close your eyes. Imagine you are in a peaceful place and picture this setting in your head. This could be a beach, a forest, or another place of your choice.
- Hear the sounds: birds, waves or wind. Imagine what the air smells like or how it feels on your skin. Notice all of the details, and stay in this place for as long as you like.

Breathing exercises

These can be done sitting or lying down in a comfortable space. Notice how you feel before and after these exercises.

Count your breaths:

Breathe in and out of your nose slowly and completely.

Count this as 1 complete breath.

Continue to count until you reach 10 complete breaths.



Try to
slow your
breathing to
quiet your
mind.

Lengthen your exhales:

Breathe in and out through your nose. Inhale using a slow count of 1, 2, 3, 4.

Pause at the top of your breath. Exhale using a slow count of 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

Pause at the bottom of your breath. Repeat.

Continue for 10 breaths or longer.

Count the pause:

Breathe in completely. Be aware of the pause at the top of your breath.

Count 1, 2, 3 then breathe out completely.

Be aware of the pause at the bottom of your breath and count 1, 2, 3.

Repeat for 10 breaths or longer

Walking meditation

- You can do this when you are on the move, walking outside, around your home, or at work.
- Clear your mind of thoughts
- Allow yourself to be present in the moment.
- Notice the feeling of your feet hitting the ground. Be aware of the speed you are walking.
- Notice how your legs and body move with each step. Be aware of all the details around you. Notice what you see, hear, smell, and feel.
- If your mind starts to wander, just bring yourself back to the present moment and focus on the details around you.



Be
present in
the
moment.

Yoga and Tai Chi

These are ways to move your body and breathe together to help improve your balance, strength, and flexibility.

Some yoga can be done sitting in a chair. You do not have to be flexible or athletic.

To learn more

Connor Integrative Health Network

UHhospitals.org/services/integrative-medicine

216-285-4070

Locations: UH Cleveland Medical Center and Warrensville Heights

The Gathering Place

touchedbycancer.org

216-595-9546

Locations: Beachwood and Westlake