

Preparing for Relaxation

In order to create an optimal relaxation experience, the following tips are recommended:

- Use a distraction free room – ensure that the phone is turned off and that others in your environment are aware and respectful of your space to relax
- Ensure a comfortable room temperature or have a blanket available if the room is on the cool side
- Use a place that is quiet or has a constant background noise
- Ensure ample space
- Create dim lighting
- Wear loose comfortable clothing
- Remove shoes, glasses, contact lenses
- Urinate prior to the session
- Ensure that you take on a seated or lying position that is comfortable – uncrossed limbs, hands in lap or at one's side, head/neck supported

The Relaxation Response

While in a relaxed state, signs of relaxation can include the following:

- Jaw slightly open, not clenched
- Smooth forehead
- Soft facial and neck muscles
- Eyelids rested
- More frequent swallowing, increased salivation
- Slower heart rate, heart beats feel softer (not pounding)
- Slower pulse
- Abdominal/Diaphragmatic breathing
- Slower rhythm of breathing
- Pink palms – blood flow to hands and feet
- Legs slightly separate (if sitting)
- Outward pointing toes (if lying on back)
- Shoulders drop
- Sensation of warmth and heaviness in extremities
- Sensation of lightness, sensation of floating on a cloud or melting into surface
- Altered time perception, blank out / drift away not knowing where mind went for a few seconds
- Increased / decreased awareness of hunger or thirst
- Increased awareness of gas in intestines
- Increased awareness of bladder fullness