

---

## COPING

---

### RELAX

Stress can trigger vestibular symptoms. Learning management techniques can help.

---

## ARTICLE

---

096

---

**DID THIS ARTICLE  
HELP YOU?  
SUPPORT VEDA @  
VESTIBULAR.ORG**

---

5018 NE 15th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97211  
1-800-837-8428  
info@vestibular.org  
vestibular.org

# Stress Management

By the Vestibular Disorders Association

## STRESS IS A PART OF LIFE

Stress is an automatic response for our body to protect itself from threats. This “fight or flight” sympathetic response is beneficial if you are in a life-threatening situation or require a short-term force of motivation. But, if you experience stress over a prolonged period of time, it could become chronic. Chronic stress can have serious consequences for your brain, body, and mind. In this article, you will learn relaxation techniques to help you manage stress.

How we handle stress makes a big difference. Finding what works best for you is key to helping you reduce stress.

Relaxation can reduce stress by:

- Decreasing heart rate
- Decreasing blood pressure
- Slowing respiratory rate
- Increasing blood flow to the major muscle groups
- Decreasing muscle tension
- Improving concentration
- Improving self confidence
- RELAXATION TECHNIQUES
- MEDITATION
- Focusing the mind on a word or phrase and letting go of other thoughts.

## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Focusing on slowly tensing then relaxing each muscle group.



## VISUALIZATION

Imagining yourself in a peaceful, relaxing place.

### TIPS TO R-E-L-A-X

- Relaxation takes practice. Even if you aren't conscious of feeling anything, the physiologic effects are still occurring. Tune into what your body is telling you.
- Find the technique that works for you. You may have to try several techniques before you find the best one for you.
- Don't force it. Relaxation happens naturally.
- Get comfortable. Sit in a chair with neck and back support, or lay on a firm bed, or try a mat on the floor. Choose a position that you can maintain for at least 10 minutes.
- Shhhhhhhhhh. Find a quiet environment that is distraction-free.
- Relax throughout the day. Some apps will remind you to meditate at intervals. For instance, Insight Timer ([insighttimer.com](https://insighttimer.com)) will also show you how many other people are meditating at the same time, which can be motivating and make you feel part of a community.
- Meditate with a group. There are many local meditation groups that can be found through Meetup.com.
- Try yoga or Tai chi. Many studios offer classes for beginners and/or classes for people with balance problems, including seniors and multiple sclerosis (MS) patients.
- Pray. A growing body of research suggests prayer helps some people cope better, heal faster from illness, and experience increased health benefits and well-being.
- Practice mindfulness. Adapt your

attitude and approach to think successful and beneficial thoughts.



---

©2020 Vestibular Disorders Association  
VeDA's publications are protected under copyright. For more information, see our permissions guide at [vestibular.org](https://vestibular.org). ***This document is not intended as a substitute for professional health care.***



--	--

5018 NE 15th Ave. Portland, OR 97211  
1-800-837-8428 info@vestibular.org vestibular.org

You can ensure that educational articles like this continue to be available to vestibular patients like you by making a tax-deductible gift to VeDA today.

One-time gift: ☐ \$40      ☐ \$50      ☐ \$75      ☐ \$100      ☐ \$250      ☐ other

Monthly gift: ☐ \$10      ☐ \$15      ☐ \$25      ☐ \$35      ☐ \$50      ☐ other

☐ Check this box if you prefer that your donation remain anonymous.

Donations gladly accepted online at <http://vestibular.org>. Check or money order in US funds, payable to VeDA.

Visa	MC	Amex	Discover	<div><div></div><div>Card number</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>Exp. date</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>CVV code</div></div>
------	----	------	----------	--	--	---

Billing address of card (if different from mailing information)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Country \_\_\_\_\_