

# Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

1. Find a comfortable, quiet place without any distractions.
2. Guide yourself through PMR or open a relaxation recording or application to guide you.
3. Notice any discomfort or tenderness you have in your body. Do not do anything that hurts, just skip whichever muscle is tender or sore. This is intended to be relaxing, so do not do anything that causes pain.
4. Observe your mind as it wanders, directing your thoughts back to focusing on tensing and relaxing your muscles.
5. Try to be mindfully engaged and relaxed without falling asleep.

**Current stress rating (0–10):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Stress rating after muscle relaxation (0–10):** \_\_\_\_\_

**My goal** will be to practice my **PMR** exercises \_\_\_\_\_ times a day/week  
at the following time(s): \_\_\_\_\_

▶ **You can always practice these skills more often.  
The more you practice, the more relaxed you will feel.**

Good times to practice relaxation skills:

- When you wake up in the morning
- Before you go to bed at night
- Before a stressful event (such as visiting the NICU or a meeting with a doctor)
- After you leave the NICU
- After experiencing a nightmare or flashback
- When you are feeling anxious
- You can practice deep breathing—but **not** PMR—while holding or providing Containing Touch for your baby