



## **PAKOLAISTEN MIELENTERVEYDEN TUKI VASTAANOTTOPALVELUISSA**

### **MUSCLE RELAXATION EXERCISE**

This exercise is intended for independent practice of relaxation. This is a tense-relax exercise. The purpose of the exercise is to learn to recognize the difference between tension and relaxation. Exercise can help your body relax. Through relaxation, you can also relieve the feeling of anxiety and the stress accumulated in the body. When you are relaxed, you can also fall asleep better.

1. Take a comfortable position for yourself. You can sit or lie down, whichever feels best for you right now.
2. During the relaxation exercise, you can keep your eyes open or closed.
3. Before starting the exercise, you can take a couple of deep and calm breaths in, and slow and long breaths out. After that, breathe evenly and calmly, according to your own natural rhythm.



*Pictures: Papunetin kuvapankki*

### **The exercise starts:**

1. Clench your hands tightly into fists so that you feel the tension in your fingers and arm. Hold this for about 10 seconds and feel the tension. Release and relax your hand one finger at a time. Feel the relaxation. Let the hands be relaxed and heavy.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

\*You can also do the relaxation by starting with the left hand, clenching it into a fist and relaxing. And after that you move to the right palm. If you do the exercise like this, pay attention to whether there is a difference between the left and the right, before and after the tension-relaxation.

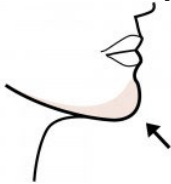


2. Raise your shoulders up, towards your ears. Hold this tension for about five seconds. Release and let your shoulders relax. Repeat this five times. Slowly tensing, raise your shoulders up towards your ears. Hold the tension for about five seconds and lower your shoulders, relax them.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

3. Next, drop your chin towards your chest. Hold your chin here for a few seconds. Then relax and lift your chin up and leave your neck relaxed and straight.



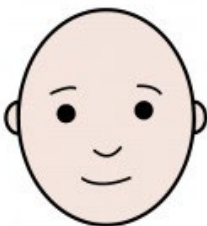
*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

4. Open your mouth, stick your tongue out as far as you can, and hold that position for 10 seconds. Relax. Then raise your tongue to the roof of your mouth until you feel tension. Take a moment and let your tongue and mouth relax.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

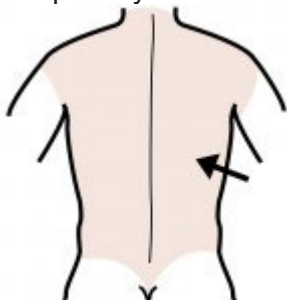
5. Then scrunch up your face. Feel the tension on your face. Grimace. And relax, let your face relax.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*



6. With your shoulders resting comfortably against the chair, move your body forward just enough to arch your back. Hold this position for 10 seconds, then relax. Alternatively, you can press your lower back against the platform.



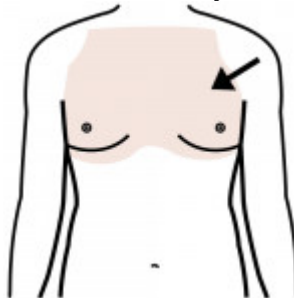
*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

7. Tense your stomach. Hold the tension in your abdominal muscles for a moment and let go and relax.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

8. Tense your chest by taking a calm deep breath - fill your lungs with air. (Hold your breath for a moment - feel the tension.) Breathe out calmly - let your lungs completely empty. Continue breathing at your own pace - let your chest relax. Let your whole body relax with each exhalation. Notice how tension and relaxation feel different. For a moment, sense your breathing rhythm - exactly as it is now.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

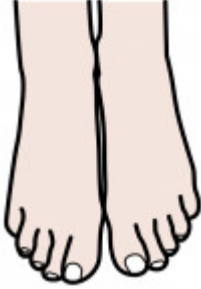


**Euroopan unionin  
osarahoittama**



**Diakonissa-  
laitos**

9. Stretch your legs with your ankles extended, as if you were standing on your toes. Notice the tension and hold the legs in this position for about 10 seconds. Then release, and feel your relaxation. Allow your leg muscles to relax more and more. Feel how they rest heavy against the base.



*Picture: Papunetin kuvapankki*

10. At the end of the exercise, feel how your whole body completely relaxes against the platform.

Your lower, middle and upper body will relax.

Feel how the platform supports you and you can rest. You can just be.

If you want, you can deepen your relaxation by breathing deeply in and out.

Let the relaxation feel in your body and mind.

After the exercise, you feel your body rested, your mind calm.

You feel like you've gained new strength.



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