4 Ways to Relax and Ease Menopause Symptoms

by AFRA WILLMORE

Relaxation Techniques for Menopause

Menopause can be stressful. Physical and emotional changes can take a toll on your well-being. If you are awake frequently at night due to hot flashes, you may be on edge due to a lack of sleep. You need help now! Let's look at some of the most effective relaxation techniques for menopause that can help you feel better right away.

1. Take a Breath

Go ahead; gently close your eyes right now and take a big, slow breath in through your nose. Let the breath expand all the way into your abdomen. If you are sitting down, place your hands on your abdomen and feel it rise as your lungs fill. Feel your breath infuse your entire body with life-giving oxygen.

Now exhale gently. Notice how much more relaxed you feel already. Repeat this exercise two more times. With each breath, feel tension slip away from your mind and body. Incorporate this practice into your daily routine several times each day. Whenever you begin to feel stressed or start a challenging task, remember to take a few breaths.

You can do this any time, any place. No one needs to know what you are doing, but you will reap the rewards of feeling more grounded, centered and relaxed. You will approach challenges with increased clarity and decreased tension.

2. Practice Present Moment Awareness

Here is a simple yet profound technique you can use immediately to ground yourself. Use this exercise several times daily. It is especially helpful if you are feeling detached and anxious. While it can be done immediately, I recommend that you do the deep breathing exercise first.

For a moment, simply stop what you are doing. Take note of everything that you see in your environment. Notice textures, colors and objects near and far. Observe as many details as you can. You may notice shadows, reflections or brilliant sunlight.

Next, concentrate on all of the sounds that you can hear. If you are listening to music, note the nuances of each instrument. If it is quiet, listen to hear if you can sense the sound that your own breath makes as you inhale and exhale. Now, notice all the odors in your environment. Hopefully, there are some pleasant aromas, but be aware of any smell in the environment. Don't judge them. Simply observe. Then, notice any tastes in your mouth. Perhaps you are chewing a piece of minty gum or maybe you had a garlicky dish for lunch. Again, do not judge, simply observe the taste. Now turn your attention to your sense of feeling. Is the air around you warm, moist, cold, dry or windy? Is the chair that you are sitting in made of a soft fabric or hard plastic? What else can you feel?

This exercise works on a couple of levels. The key is not to judge your environment; simply be in it. It can be a

distraction from your problems. It may also serve to increase your ability to trust your senses.

When you are stressed, tired or hurried, you likely go on auto-pilot and essentially numb out. This exercise provides you with the opportunity to essentially come back into yourself. If you are feeling detached, disconnected or panicky, this exercise provides rapid relief.

While you are going about your day, remind yourself every now and then to simply stop and notice what is going on. The key is to observe and not to judge. If you notice something that is not to your liking, you may decide to change an aspect of the environment later, but for now simply concentrate on observing it.

3. Take a Shower

Some experts believe that the negative ions formed around running water promote relaxation. I don't know much about that, but I do know that I feel better whenever I am around water.

Before you shower, give yourself a rubdown with a dry loofah or bath brush. Brush inwards toward the direction of your heart, and use long strokes. This will enliven and coordinate your senses as well as eliminate dead skin cells. Your body will look and feel better as your pores become unblocked. Your skin, the body's largest organ of detoxification, will function more efficiently.

After you brush your skin, rub a spoonful of sesame oil over your entire body. Work it through your hair to combat dryness. This moisturizes your body and prepares you for your shower. If you like, add a few drops of your favorite essential oil to a bottle of the oil you anoint yourself with. This is an ancient Ayurvedic practice that has been used for thousands of years to promote well-being.

Step into the shower. Pay attention to how the water feels. Consciously let the water relax you as it strikes your neck and back. Consider how fortunate you are to have access to clean water and a lovely shower.

When your shower is complete, dry yourself off with the best quality towel that you can afford. Dress in comfortable clothing made of natural, breathable, non-irritating fabric.

This entire process adds less than five minutes to a normal shower process, and you reap the rewards for the rest of your day. When adding oils or other additives to showers and baths, take precautions, so that you do not slip and fall. Wipe the shower floor after you are finished in case any traces of oil remain.

4. Enjoy a Luxurious Bath

While showers are quick and easy, there is nothing like a luxurious bath to ease tension. Purchase your favorite bath products or make your own with Epsom salts, calming herbs and essential oils.

It is simple to make your own spa treatments. You can add Epsom salts to your bath water. Epsom salts are rich in the relaxing element magnesium. Tension and toxins will melt away.

If you are experiencing hot flashes enjoy a tepid herbal bath. Take a handful of fresh or dried peppermint leaves and tie them into a cloth. Submerge the cloth in the bath water and cool down.

You can also add a spoonful of a light oil, such as grapeseed oil, to your bath and sprinkle in a couple of drops of your favorite essential oil. This practice will keep your skin supple, and it reduces itchiness, which sometimes is a result from dry skin caused by hormonal changes. Try clary sage for its ability to relax and support wellness. Lavender, rose and chamomile are excellent choices too. If you use chamomile essential oil, only add one drop of the oil to your bath as it is concentrated. The aromatherapy will relax muscle tension and improve your mood.

Live Well During Menopause

Menopause does not need to be anxiety-provoking. Yes, it is a big change with many implications; however at its

most basic, menopause is simply a sign of transition into a different season. You are wiser now. Many people are more beautiful inside and out as the years pass.

By this stage of your life, you have been victorious over many challenges. In comparison to what you have lived through, menopause can be a breeze. Reward yourself daily. This is your time!