

Self-Massage Techniques WebMD Feature

Keep in Mind Before You Start

With all of these exercises, remember, you never want to cause yourself pain -- but you do want to reach the area that is tender, because that is where the tension is. Always stretch the muscle out after massaging the area.

Self-Massage Therapy to Relieve Tired Eyes

- Close your eyes. Place your thumbs under your eyebrows, starting at the inside corner of each eye socket. Press and gently move the thumbs in tiny circles, working slowly towards the outsides of your eyebrows and continuing this movement all around your eyes, ending back at the bridge of your nose.
- Repeat this several times, spending a little extra time at the indentation of the inner eye socket, where the bridge of the nose meets the ridge of the eyebrows - an especially tender point on many people.

Self-Massage Therapy to Ease Headaches and Tension

- Start by placing your thumbs on your cheekbones close to your ears, and use your fingertips to gently apply pressure and rub the temples (the soft spot between the corner of your eye and your ear).
- Using very firm pressure and a tiny circular motion, gradually move your fingers up along your hairline until they meet in the middle of your forehead, massaging your entire forehead and scalp as you inch along.

Self-Massage Therapy to Relax the Hands

- Stretch your hands and fingers out. Rub each finger from the base to the tip, gently pulling and twisting each finger as you go.
- Next, rest your left hand, palm upward, on your lap. Squeeze the fleshy part of your palm between your right thumb and index finger, moving from your wrist to the base of your thumb.
- Now squeeze that web between your left index finger and thumb several times, looking for any tender points.
- Then rub the entire palm with your right thumb, applying firm pressure and using gliding strokes from the wrist to the base of each finger.
- Repeat this process on your right hand.

Self-Massage Therapy to Relieve Neck Tension

- Start by sitting at a table, mold your hands over your shoulders. Exhale, letting your head drop back as you slowly squeeze your fingers towards your palms, gliding up the muscles of your back and shoulders towards your neck.
- Now, rest your elbows on the table, allowing your head to drop forward slightly. Massage your neck from your shoulders to the base of your skull using your fingertips to make small deep circles into the muscles on either side of your spine.
- Place both hands on the back of your head, interlacing the fingers. Drop your head forward and allow the weight of your elbows to pull your head gently down, stretching the muscles of your neck and those that run down your back.

Self-Massage Therapy to Loosen Tight Shoulders

You will need a tennis ball or solid rubber ball for this one.

- Stand 18 inches from the wall, with your feet hip distance apart. Go into a partial squat with your buttocks against the wall.
- Lean forward, placing the ball behind your back at the top of your shoulder.
- Slowly stand up -- an inch at a time -- pressing against the wall and letting the ball roll slowly down the muscles along the side of your spine, stopping when you find a tender point and waiting for the pain to subside.
- Reverse the process, slowly sitting down into a squat, and allowing the ball to move back up to the top of your shoulder muscle.
- Now switch sides, moving the ball to the other side of your body and repeat the same slow massage.

Not only will you be releasing the tension from your shoulders, but you will also be developing strong leg muscles at the same time.

Self-Massage Therapy to Release the Lower Back

- Stand up and put your hands on your waist, with your thumbs behind you and fingers facing forward.
- Gently press your thumbs into the muscles at either side of the spine -- but be careful not to press on the spine itself.
- Keep your thumbs pressed in while you move in a very tiny motion -- up, down, and around in a tiny circle. Spend extra time where you find a tender point - making sure not to cause pain.
- Move your thumbs gradually, an inch at a time, up either side of the spine as far as your hands can comfortably reach. Then gradually move back down your back and press on the bony surface of the sacrum.

Self-Massage Therapy to Soothe Tired Feet

- Bring your left foot onto the seat of your chair so you can see your instep. Using your right thumb, apply very firm pressure along the side of your foot, working from the heel to the big toe. Walk your thumb across the ridge where the toes meet the ball of your foot. When you get to the small toe, use your thumb and index finger to squeeze and twist along the entire surface of the toe. Work each toe individually until you get back to the large toe. Take all of your toes in one hand and stretch them back and forth, bending and flexing.
- While supporting the top of your left foot with your left hand, use the knuckles of your right hand to apply deep pressure to the entire surface of the bottom of your foot, working from the heel to the toes and back down.
- Stretch your toes, flex and extend your feet, and do a few ankle rotations.

Repeat the entire process on the right foot.