

# Autogenic Relaxation

Patient Education: Side Effect and Symptom Management Series



**Autogenic Relaxation (AR)** is a skill that you can use to relax your body. By focusing on feelings of heaviness and warmth in different parts of your body, you can release the tension in your muscles and become relaxed.

## Benefits of AR

- Decrease stress
- Give a sense of control
- Decrease anxiety
- Improve your sleep
- Help you concentrate
- Help you feel more rested

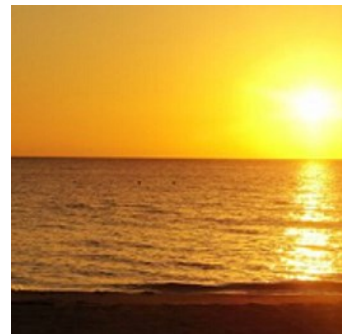
## How to Relax with AR

1. Get into a comfortable position. You may stand, sit or lay down on your back.
2. Begin with your right arm. Tell yourself “My right arm is heavy and warm.”
3. Tell yourself “My right arm is heavy and warm” 3 times slowly.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for your left arm. Then, try the skill with other muscle groups.

In this order, focus on your shoulders, upper arms, forearms, hands, chest, back, trunk, thighs, lower legs and feet.



Feeling of Heaviness



Feelings of Warmth

## Helpful Hints

- AR should not feel bad. Stop AR if it is painful or not comfortable.
- Use long deep breaths to help you relax.
- The more you practice the easier AR will become.

① **Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.**

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