Food Safety and Inspection Service

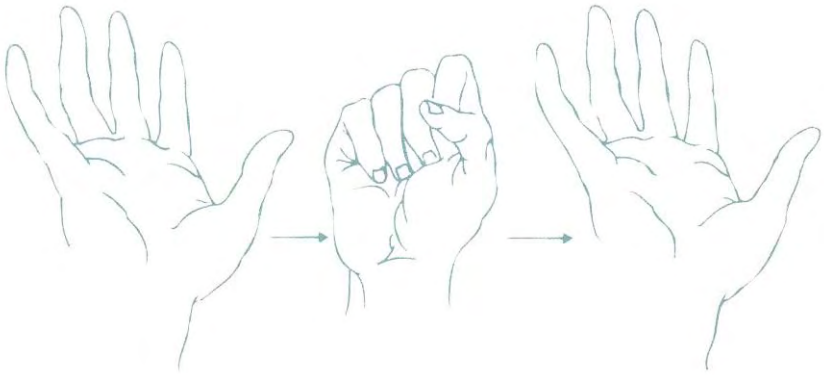
Wellness Training Program

Job Aid Seven: Progressive Relaxation

Progressive Relaxation, a powerful relaxation technique, is based on the premise of teaching the different parts of your body how to tell the difference between the sensation of being tense and the sensation of being relaxed. Progressive relaxation is a process of tightening and releasing separate muscle groups.

Progressive Relaxation Exercise

- Tighten your hand muscles by making a fist. Feel the tension in your hand. Hold this position for a few seconds.
- Relax your fist, letting the tension melt away. Your hand may feel almost like it could float. Your forearm may also feel lighter.
- Note the difference between the tensed and relaxed states.
- Repeat these steps with each muscle group in your body; you can start with your arms, face, neck, back, chest, stomach, legs, and feet.



The above techniques can be used at work during a 10-minute break or during down time. They require no special equipment and can be done in less than 10 minutes.