

# Simple Stretching and Mindful Breathing to Manage Pain (Physical & Emotional)

## How much do I have to do?

Even one minute of mindful breathing or simple stretching has benefits. **The more you practice, the better you can manage your pain.**

## What can help me manage my pain?



### ❖ Control your Breath

**Why?** It can lower your heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension.

**How?** Take 5 breaths with long, slow breaths out.

### ❖ Release Muscle/Emotional Tension

**Why?** It can decrease pain in the body and in the mind by interrupting the stress cycle in the brain.

**How?** (1) Simple stretching (2) 'Tense and Release' exercises

### ❖ Find a Better Way to Move

**Why?** Not moving often makes pain worse. Tight muscles can press on nerves and unused joints can dry out. So even very small movements have benefits.

**How?** If moving hurts, try a different way so that muscles can stretch gently.

### ❖ Strengthen Core Muscles

**Why?** Making core muscles stronger helps to keep your spine in good alignment so the bones do not press on nerves.

**How?** Do simple core exercises, both seated and standing (balance on one leg).

### ❖ Keep Breathing When you Feel Pain or Tension

**Why?** Holding the breath causes us stress and our muscles can tighten.

**How?** (1) Do core exercises and practice NOT holding your breath when you feel discomfort.

(2) When you feel pain, take 5 breaths with long, slow breaths out.

### ❖ Be Ready with Your Simple Plan

❖ **Why?** A short, simple stretch or a 5-part breath may interrupt the stress cycle in your body and mind.

❖ **How?** Choose a 2-minute simple stretch or breath that you like. Next time you start to feel physical or emotional pain, say to yourself: "Oh, there is that pain (or uncomfortable thought). I know what to do."

**Always check with your health care provider to see if this program is right for you.**

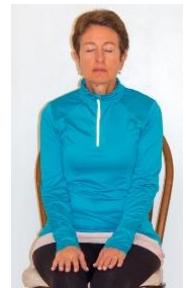
**Please do not continue a stretch if you experience tingling, burning or numbness.**

**Free breaks at [www.greentreeyoga.org](http://www.greentreeyoga.org) FREE link.**

**Questions: Contact Yael Calhoun 801-656-7885 (c) or [greentreeyoga@comcast.net](mailto:greentreeyoga@comcast.net)**

**Quick ways to practice each:**

**Control your breath.**



**Release muscle tension with simple stretching**



**Release muscle tension  
with 'tense and release' exercises**



**To find a better way to move**



**To breathe and not to hold your breath  
when feeling discomfort or tension**

