

## Muscle Relaxation Exercise

Muscle relaxation techniques are easy to do. Combining muscle relaxation with deep breathing can be even more effective in relieving stress. Some people find muscle relaxation useful for helping them to fall asleep.

- 1 Lie down in a comfortable position, with your arms slightly out to the side and your legs straight if you can.
- 2 Begin to breathe deeply for a minute or so.
- 3 Concentrating on each body part, one at a time, you will tense the surrounding group of muscles as tightly as you can, hold for 10 seconds, then release and completely relax.
- 4 Beginning your head and face— move down through your body to your feet and toes, holding each exercise for 10 seconds and then releasing:
  - Raise your eyebrows as high as you can
  - Smile as wide and hard as you can
  - Touch your chin to your chest
  - Raise your shoulders as high as you can
  - Make your arms straight
  - Make fists
  - Tighten your stomach
  - Tighten your glute muscles
  - Put your legs straight
  - Bend your ankles, pointing your toes at your knees
  - Curl your toes- hold and release
- 5 After relaxing each body part, notice how heavy each part feels when it is totally relaxed.
- 6 When completed, continue performing the deep breathing.