

Meditation's soothing effects

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(HealthDay)—Meditation has been embraced by cultures around the world for thousands of years.

Many people meditate for mental wellness, to relieve stress and become more calm and relaxed.

According to the U.S. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, there's evidence that practicing [meditation](#) may have a positive effect on certain medical conditions, like helping to lower [blood pressure](#) and easing symptoms of anxiety and depression, [irritable bowel syndrome](#) and insomnia.

You don't need a dedicated space or a lot of time to try meditation. There are many techniques, and one might feel more comfortable to you than another.

Here are some easy ones to help you get started.

The first [technique](#) involves simply sitting or lying down and allowing your [mind](#) to go where it wants, without trying to control it. Watch where your thoughts go and what you think about as you let your mind wander at will. Do this for 3 to 5 minutes.

Another easy technique is to focus on breathing. Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and breathe naturally. Notice how different parts of your body move as you breathe in and out.

As an alternative to focusing on breathing, try focusing on a single point. This could be staring at an object like a candle or saying a word or phrase—a mantra—over and over. When you feel your mind wandering, bring it back to focus on the object or mantra that you chose.

A lot of people can only meditate for a few minutes at first before losing concentration. Stick with it, and you'll soon experience meditation's soothing benefits.

More information: The U.S. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health has more about the science and safety of [meditation](#).

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