

# Student Health Centre

## Panic Attacks



# Breathing

Take a deep breath. This is a natural and effective way to reduce stress. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth ten times. Notice how the air being breathed in is cooler than that which you breath out. This quick exercise can be done anywhere.

## Other Techniques for Tackling Anxiety



Think positively.  
Tell yourself things like:

- It's going to be o.k.
- I am going to remain relaxed in this situation.
- Nothing bad is going to happen to me
- My breathing will help me stay in control

## Eating the Right Food



Some foods are more calming than others. Calming foods include milk, potato, bread, baked beans, raw vegetables. Other foods just help to wind you up. Sugar, for example, may give an instant "energy boost" but it also makes you more nervy than before. All sweet foods will increase your overall stress levels if you eat them a lot.

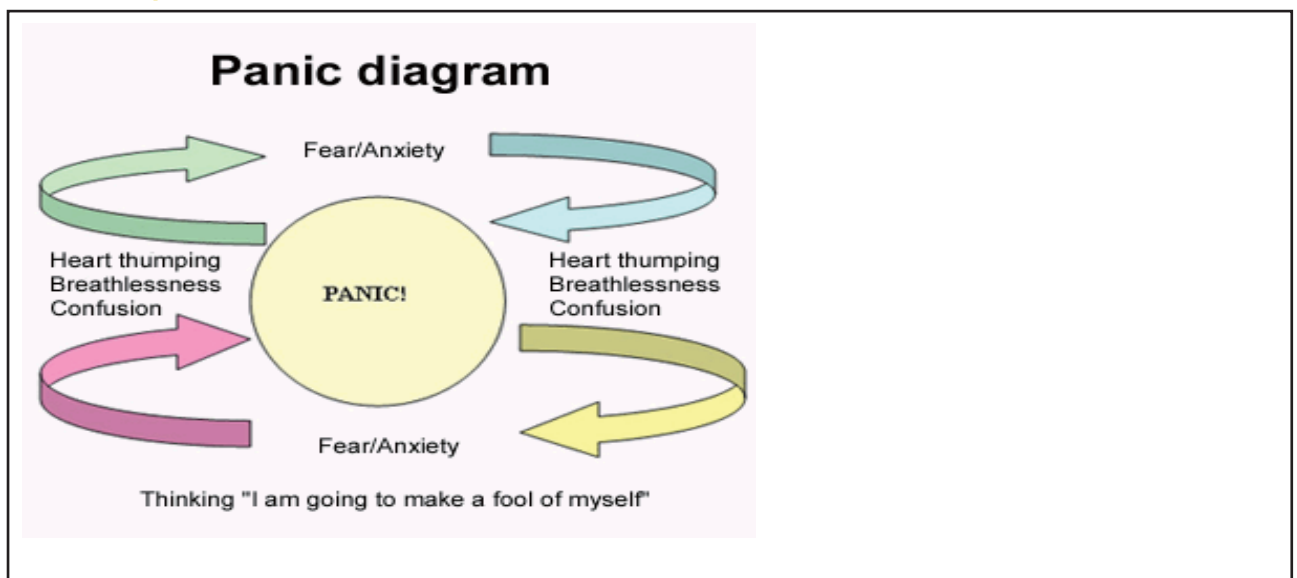
**Exercise.**

Exercise allows your body to get rid of its nervous energy.

**Slowing down.**

Many people make the mistake of speeding up when they feel anxious. The more you hurry the more anxious you will become. Do you best to move slowly and calmly and slow down the pace of your thinking.

## Relaxation Technique



## Relaxation Technique

Useful hints for using the relaxation technique Planning. Plan the 20 mins or so needed for the exercise into your daily schedule, even if it means getting up a little earlier. Start at a manageable point. Choose a time when you are not feeling anxious, or you are feeling only mildly anxious and practice the relaxation exercise. Later on you will be able to use it to counteract anxiety.

1. Squeeze and tense your fists and forearms. Hold for 5 seconds and then relax for 10 seconds.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

2. Bring your hands to your shoulders to tighten your upper arms. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

3. Shrug your shoulders up toward your ears to tense your shoulders. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

4. Push your chin toward your chest to tighten the back of your neck. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

5. Scrunch up your face. Hold briefly, then relax. When relaxed keep the lips parted slightly to prevent jaw tension. Repeat.  
Slow down your breathing.

6. Stretch back your shoulders, tightening your chest. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

7. Suck in your stomach muscles, making them tight. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

8. Tighten your buttocks, and feel yourself lifting off you the chair. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

9. Stretch your legs out in front of you, and tense your thighs. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.

10. While sitting with your feet on the floor, go up on your toes and tense your calves and feet. Hold briefly, then relax.  
Repeat. Slow down your breathing.