

An introduction to active rest



Active rest (also known as semi-supine or constructive rest) is a great way of recharging your batteries, especially if you do it once a day (or even more than once a day!) for between 5 and 20 minutes. Choose a time of day that suits you.

Lie down on an exercise mat or rug (see photo). Put some paperback books under the back of your head, not touching the neck. Allow your back its natural curve. Feet are hip-width apart. Don't clasp your hands or close your eyes. Keep your mouth closed and breathe through your nose.

Ask your neck muscles to release. Ask for length all along your spine, as if the crown of your head is moving away from your toes. Allow your shoulders to widen and your knees to go up. Don't make any muscular effort; don't think of it as either relaxation or stretching.

Send messages from your mind to ask for the release of excess muscular tension. You are wishing for appropriate muscular tone throughout the body so that your movement in everyday life is easier and more fluid.

Notice that your body is supported by head, shoulders, back, pelvis, and feet. Notice the space all around you and what you can hear, see, and smell. Enjoy this time when you can be calm, quiet, but self-aware.

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