

# Tips that Count

Wellness information for your journey to a healthier you!

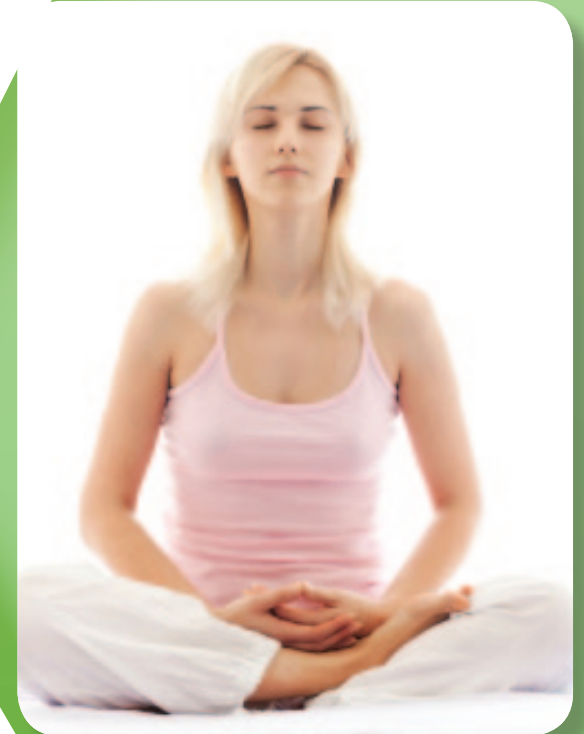
## Relaxation 101: Meditation

There are various forms of meditation, many of which focus on repeating a single word (often called a mantra) or visualizing an image. You can choose any word or image that pleases you, including one that reflects your faith, such as “God,” “Christ,” or “Allah.” Some research shows that just 20 minutes a day of this mental exercise offers many health benefits.

### Here’s how to get started:

1. In comfortable clothes, sit in a chair or, using a cushion, on the floor (spine straight).
2. With eyes closed, focus for 15 or 20 minutes on saying a word or sound silently to yourself, or on imagining an image, while breathing deeply and slowly.
3. Whenever your mind wanders, as it surely will, don’t scold yourself—simply return to the sound or image in your mind. This is the key. Never reproach yourself when you catch your mind wandering; just start saying your word or sound or visualizing your image.

At least while you’re still learning, try to practice this form of relaxation during an already quiet time when you’re not stressed. To learn more, visit the National Institutes of Health website: <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/meditation/overview.htm>.



All information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician before starting a new fitness regimen.