

# FACE MASSAGE

Massage techniques developed by Heidi Frederick and Rachel Lang of the NYC-based FaceLove

This five to ten-minute mini massage routine is a guided interactive meditation which activates the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS), while clearing the mind with the use of aroma, breath, and calming mantras.”

Prepare:

1. Dab a few drops of essential oil—like bergamot, ylang-ylang, or sandalwood—into a tissue. **(Note: test and check which oils are right for you and your family)**
2. Dim the lights. The room should be on the cooler side. If it appeals, play water or soothing nature sounds.
3. Holding a hot cup of caffeine-free tea is a calming bedtime ritual in itself; it fits beautifully here and also warms your hands.
4. Slip on an eye mask—completely optional, but the mild pressure it exerts around the head can help with relaxation.

Protocol for the face::

- Place the essential-oil-infused tissue in front of the nasal passages, and inhale to maximum capacity or five counts, filling the abdomen to the chest. Repeat five to ten times. If your mind wanders, here's a trick: Think “inhale” as you breathe in and “exhale” as you release. Note: Using aroma enables the body to breathe diaphragmatically or more completely to have a full oxygen-carbon dioxide exchange, releasing anxiety. Silently saying a mantra while doing breath ritual helps the mind clear the day's thoughts.
- With firm pressure, slide your hands up from your eyebrows, hand over hand, up to the middle of the forehead, and up toward the hairline with medium to firm pressure. Repeat several times.
- Massage your forehead in circular swoops, sliding both hands from the middle of the forehead out toward the temples, then coming back to the middle of the forehead. Do this a few times—the motion is calming. Soothing the forehead helps relax the stress of the body.
- Starting at the bridge of your nose, begin pinching and inching up toward the outer corners of the eyebrows, then place your fingers on top of the brows (thumbs underneath) to grip the full edges of the brow line. Repeat several times. The eyebrows correspond to the adrenal glands, which go into overdrive when we're stressed. Manipulating the area soothes and helps with stress.
- Place your middle finger between the brows, place your other middle finger directly on top of it, and trace three small spirals with the two fingers, increasing the pressure as you go.

### Protocol for the face (continued)

- Repeat in the opposite direction. RepealIn Chinese medicine, the point between the brows corresponds with the liver, which not only aids in eliminating toxins but also processes irritability, emotional inflammation, and anger.
- Place your (tea-warmed) fingers over each closed eye. Gently press with the pads of the fingers onto the lid, feeling the eye slowly move inward. Repeat several times.
- Massage just under the eyes, on top of the lower orbital muscle. Repeat this to dispel tension in the eye muscles, allowing the body to surrender faster (the eyes are still working as we sleep, and are often neglected, even by the art of touch).
- Place the middle fingers bilaterally on either side of the nostrils, and repeat pressure-point spiral movements from above to release sinus pressure, which can disrupt sleep.
- Slowly slide hands to grip the jaw muscle; with medium to firm pressure, move in an upward circular motion, releasing tension. Finish by pressing down on the jaw's pressure points that are in line with the lower part of the earlobe.
- Slide hands on either side of your face so that your fingers scissor the ears, working from the jaw and both sides of the ears upward toward the temples. Repeat several times. This movement is believed to help release endorphins, the body's natural pain blockers and pleasure chemicals. If repeated enough times, it is said to put you into a state of bliss. The ears are one of the most primal parts of the body and their reflexive points are known to have powerful nurturing effects. (Babies play with their ears or their mother's ears while feeding as a way to calm anxiety).

### Protocol for the body

- Stretch out on a bed or mat and hug your knees up to the chest while taking deep breaths. Gently twist your legs over to the right side, hold for three to five counts, and repeat on the other side. Place your feet flat on a surface while bending your knees, and cross one leg over the other for a lower back stretch. Hold for five to ten counts, and repeat on the other side.
- Turn off the lights, close your eyes, and as you're crossing your legs as above, repeat this mantra in your head: "My legs are relaxing; my legs are relaxed."
- Squeeze and tighten the middle of the body (stomach, butt, chest), and repeat: "My center is relaxing; my center is relaxed."
- Squeeze and tighten your shoulders, bringing them up to your ears and releasing, and say: "My shoulders are relaxing; my shoulders are relaxed."
- Squeeze all the muscles in the face and neck and release: "My face is relaxing; my face is relaxed."
- Inhale the essential oil one last time and have a wonderful night's sleep.

Source: <https://goop.com/wellness/health/face-massage-your-way-to-sleep/>