

## Shake & Stretch Factsheet

### Shake your way to better physical and mental health

Shaking and stretching are simple yet powerful practices that can enhance your physical and psychological well-being. They offer a range of benefits, from reducing muscle tension and inflammation to promoting relaxation and improving mood. Read on to find out about their role in relieving stress, releasing muscle tension, and enhancing overall health – and how to reap the benefit in minimum time.



Firstly, a word about why we tense our muscles even when we are simply reading an email with an irritating message. It's called armoured, and we do it because the mind can't differential a psychological 'threat' from a physical one. And it's responses are programmed from all the years when humans lead more physical lives as hunter gatherers.

That means the body responds to mental stress in similar ways it would if you were about to be chased by a hungry lion or hit by a hostile neighbour living in the hut next door. Muscles tighten to prepare to move or 'armour' against a blow. But over time in modern life with so many mental stresses, we end up with the muscles 'fixed' in this tense state.

But luckily the body's habit of hanging on to physical and emotional tension can be effectively addressed through shaking and stretching.

### Physiological & Psychological Benefits of stretching and shaking

- **Stress Reduction:** Shaking and stretching trigger the release of endorphins, natural mood elevators, which help reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Muscle Relaxation:** Stretching exercises promote muscle relaxation by increasing blood flow, reducing muscle tightness, and releasing accumulated tension, leading to a sense of physical and emotional relief.
- **Reduction of Inflammation:** Stretching can help reduce inflammation in the body, which is associated with various chronic health issues. By enhancing blood circulation and promoting relaxation, stretching supports the body's natural anti-inflammatory processes.

- **Enhanced Flexibility and Range of Motion:** Stretching improves joint and muscle flexibility, reducing the risk of injury, and enhancing overall mobility.
- **Detoxification:** Shaking aids in the removal of waste products from the body, supporting overall detoxification processes.
- **Improved Blood Circulation:** Rhythmic shaking increases blood circulation, delivering oxygen and nutrients to tissues, aiding in recovery and healing.

## Making movement a daily habit

10 minutes first things is a game changer for the day ahead. An evening shake or stretch can help you transition into a more relaxed state after a busy day. But even 30 seconds of quick movement between meetings or when you've been sitting at a PC for a few hours can help you reset your system.

However you feel stretching or shaking movements can help – they can calm you down when stressed and give you a shot of energy when you hit a slump.

- [This video on YouTube](#) shows one way to start a shaking practice.
- [This is a slightly slower approach](#). But you can easily find others to try out.