



# The Sibley Report

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... the place to find valuable information to help make your job - and your life easier! If you have a topic idea or any other suggestions, please give our Editor - Angie Catenaro - a call. Sibley & Associates is a national disability management firm with a decade of experience, nearly 200 healthcare professionals and state-of-the-art technology. Our customers benefit from all the advantages a large company has to offer...while also benefiting from the "small business" customer service philosophy of our dedicated Insurance Services Division.

# Sibley

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## Stressed Out? ...Here are some stress busters!

Many people find physical relaxation techniques useful in preventing stress and/or lowering stress. Here are some \*techniques you might find helpful:

**Exhalation Breathing** - slows your breathing to help calm you down. Do this exercise for ten minutes or longer - it's up to you!

1. Lie on your back with your arms at your sides.
2. Begin to breathe in while raising your arms towards the ceiling (with your elbows bent). Move your arms all the way up and over your head to the floor as you inhale.
3. Reverse the order: breathe out slowly and smoothly as you return your arms to your sides.
4. After you have done this several times, slowly inhale and exhale without moving your arms.

**Progressive Relaxation** - helps relax tense muscles. At first, this may take 20 minutes, but with practice, you will be able to do this in 5 minutes.

1. Sit or lie down on your back in a comfortable, quiet room. Close your eyes.
  2. Make tight fists, hold for 5 seconds, then relax your hands. Do this 3 times.
- Pay attention to the different sensations of tension and relaxation.

3. Repeat step 2 with all of your muscle groups: arms, shoulders, chest, abdomen, back, hips, thighs, lower legs and feet.

**Stretching Exercises** - If done correctly, stretching can be relaxing and reduce stress. Never bounce when you stretch, you could injure muscles. Do stretching exercise for 5-10 minutes.

1. Decide what muscles to stretch (e.g., your legs and feet). As you stretch, think about the area being stretched; imagine the tension leaving as you gently take these areas to their comfortable limit.
2. Exhale as you stretch and inhale on the release. Breathe deeply and slowly - do not hold your breath.
3. Close your eyes while you repeat this with other muscles.

Even children experience stress and, in light of recent world events, you might find yourself and/or family members feeling more stressed than usual. To help you discuss recent events with your children, please find attached a list of tips that was distributed by the City of Toronto Board of Education after September 11, 2001.

\*Heart & Stroke Foundation, Coping with Stress, Risk Factor Series, 1997

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