

Info on fainting/applied tension

For some people, their fear, is linked to fainting, or feeling faint. When their fear is triggered (for example, by seeing blood or thinking about an injection), their heart rate and blood pressure increase (as with other kinds of fears), but then rapidly drop. It is this fall in blood pressure that can cause fainting. Many people do not confront their fear because they are worried they may embarrass or hurt themselves through fainting.

If your fear is linked to fainting (or feeling very faint), the next step is to teach yourself applied tension.

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This is how you do it.

- 1 Sit down somewhere comfortable.
- 2 Tense the muscles in your arms, upper body and legs, and hold this tension for 10 to 15 seconds, or until you start to feel the warmth rising in your face.
- 3 Release the tension and go back to your normal sitting position.
- 4 After about 20 to 30 seconds, go through the tension procedure again until you feel the warmth in your face.
- 5 Repeat this sequence so that you have practised the tension five times.

If you can, practise this procedure three times every day for about a week, before moving on to face your fear. This will help you to build your confidence in using the procedure and increasing your blood pressure. It will take about five minutes on each occasion. It may be helpful to think ahead and plan for when you are likely to have a few spare minutes to do it. If you get headaches after doing this exercise, take care not to tense the muscles in your face and head. Also, do go gently when tensing any part of your body where you have any health problems.