

Unit 3: Stress Management through Kalari Uzhichil

PAPER 9 — Pain Management & Stress Relief Techniques

Unit 3: Stress Management through Kalari Uzhichil

(Identify stress signs • Full-body relaxation sequences • Breathwork integration • Marma for calming • Post-session rest)

Identifying physical symptoms of stress -

Stress shows up first as **tone and breath** before it becomes pain. Typical musculoskeletal signs include **upper-trapezius and jaw guarding, suboccipital tightness, thoracic “bracing”** (shallow rib movement), **lumbar holding**, and **hip flexor tension**. Autonomic markers: **cool hands/feet, rapid or erratic breathing, dry mouth, gut churn/constipation, and startle sensitivity**. Skin may feel **cool-dry (Vāta), hot-reactive (Pitta), or puffy (Kapha)**—match media and tempo accordingly.

Intake screen (90 s): (1) rate stress 0-10 today, (2) sleep hours last night, (3) three breath cycles—note exhale length, (4) palpate forehead/temple, suboccipital, parasternal, and palm/sole centers for reactivity. Red-flag out if chest pain, new neuro deficit, fever with hot joint, or syncope history.

Full-body relaxation massage sequences -

Goal is **nervous-system down-shift**: long, even strokes; pressure **2-4/10**; **distal→proximal** flow; **4-6 marmas max**; finish seated. Oils: **coconut/Pinda** for hot-reactive states; **Dhanvantaram/Kṣīrabala** (thin film) for dry-twitchy Vāta; **light sesame** for Kapha heaviness (brisk-light start, then slow).

30-minute reset (desk stress)

1. **Open (5 min):** thin oil film to forearms/hands → calves/feet; long **Thirumu** distal→proximal.
2. **Back & neck (12 min):** prone or seated—parascapular glides, **wave sweeps** along ribs; **Krikatikā** decompression (feather).
3. **Marma (8 min):** **Sthāpanī, Śaṅkha/Āvarta, Talahridaya** (palms/soles) — exhale-timed.
4. **Integrate (5 min):** midline sweep sacrum→crown; seated exit, two slow breaths.

45-minute whole-body calm

1. **Lower limbs (10):** feet→calves→thighs; light ring-work at **Gulpha/Jānu** (no vertical jabs).
2. **Upper limbs (6):** palms→forearms→arms; finish at **Talahridaya** (palm).
3. **Back (12):** forearm glides; thoracic rib waves; sacral rest.
4. **Head/face (7):** temples, brow, jaw (feather only).
5. **Marma (6):** **Sthāpanī, Vidyura, Hṛdaya** (broad), **Nābhi** (broad).
6. **Integrate (4):** seated close; quiet palms on thighs.

75-minute deep release (high arousal)

1. **Open (10):** thin warm film; distal→proximal returns.
2. **Posterior chain (18):** calves/hamstrings/back; optional **Navarakizhi** 6-8 min if Vāta-dry.
3. **Anterior (15):** thigh→abdomen (clockwise, feather)→parasternal rib waves.
4. **Upper quarter (12):** parascapular glides; Amsa-phalaka centring (**Akam-thirumu**).
5. **Marma (12):** **Talahridaya (sole)** → **Nābhi (broad)** → **Hṛdaya (broad)** → **Sthāpanī** → crown **Ādhipati** (touch-and-lift).
6. **Integrate (8):** midline sweep; seated stillness; water sip.

Safety: never stack **heat + pressure** on **Hṛdaya, Nābhi, Basti, Ādhipati**; avoid carotid compression; pain ceiling during work $\leq 3/10$ and back to baseline by next day.

Breathwork integration and its calming effects -

Breath is the **metronome of safety**. Start contact on the **client's exhale** and lighten on inhale.

- **4-in / 6-out** — default parasympathetic cue; lowers heart rate and tone.
- **Even 5-5** — balances Pitta irritability when slow exhales feel frustrating.
- **Box 3-3-3-3** — mild activation for Kapha; avoid in anxiety or pregnancy.

Cueing: "In softly through nose... slow out... let shoulders melt." Match your own breath to theirs (co-regulation). If breaths shorten, **pause**, broaden contact, and reset with two quiet cycles.

Techniques for calming the nervous system via marma activation -

Treat marmas as **fields**, not dots; work **obliquely**, pressure **feather→light**, **2-5 exhales** each.

- **Sthāpanī (glabella), Śaṅkha/Āvarta (temple/brow)** — quiet mind/eyes; use micro-vibration 10-15 s then stillness.
- **Vidhura (mastoid-ear sulcus)** — ease head/ear pressure; feather only.
- **Apālapa/Apastambha (parasternal windows)** — broaden breath; cupped wave on exhale.
- **Hṛdaya (precordial)** — **broad palm rest** only; 2-3 exhales.
- **Nābhi (umbilical hub)** — clockwise feather spirals; no vertical force.
- **Talahridaya (palm/sole)** — distal grounding; ideal opener/closer.
- **Ādhipati (crown)** — light closing touch; skip if dizzy or hypotensive.

Optional adjuncts (with consent): gentle **humming** on exhale while holding Sthāpanī or parasternal fields to lengthen exhalation. Drop sound if agitation rises.

Post-session rest practices for deep stress release -

Aim for **quiet entry back to life** so gains stick.

- **Table rest (2-5 min):** supine, knees bolstered; therapist palm on shins or ankles; two **4/6** cycles.
- **Seated re-entry (1-2 min):** feet grounded, palms on thighs; eyes half-closed; one slow head turn each side.
- **After-care (home):** 10-minute evening walk; **4/6 breath 5 min**; warm shower; screens down 60 min before sleep; light snack with protein if hungry.
- **Boundaries:** avoid intense exercise, loud environments, or heavy meals for 1-2 h.
- **Journaling (optional):** one sentence—"Body feels ___; breath feels ___."

Summary Tables (LMS quick-reference)

A) Recognising stress in the body

Domain	Signs you may find	Immediate adjustment
Breath & pulse	Fast, shallow; uneven exhale	Switch to 4/6 ; slow pacing
Tone	Upper-trap/jaw/suboccipital guarding	Feather head work; longer distal strokes
Skin feel	Cool-dry (Vāta) / hot-reactive (Pitta) / puffy (Kapha)	Warm-unctuous / cool-even / brisk-light then slow

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Domain	Signs you may find	Immediate adjustment
Gut & chest	Tight belly; rib bracing	Clockwise feather belly; parasternal waves

B) Relaxation sequences at a glance

Duration	Focus	Sequence key points
30 min	Desk stress	Hands/feet → parascapular → head points → Talahridaya close
45 min	Whole-body	Feet→legs→arms→back→head → Hṛdaya/Nābhi (broad) → seated
75 min	High arousal	Posterior chain ± Navara → anterior ribs/abdomen → marma set (distal→midline→head)

C) Breath presets

Pattern	Use when	Contraindications	Cue
4-in / 6-out	Default down-shift	Dizziness → shorten "In soft... longer out..."	
5 / 5	Pitta irritability	-	"Even in... even out..."
3-3-3-3	Kapha heaviness	Anxiety, pregnancy	"Square breath... gentle holds"

D) Calming marma set (safe defaults)

Marma	Contact	Dose	Notes
Talahridaya (palm/sole)	Broad hold	2-4 exhales	Open/close, grounding
Sthāpanī / Śāṅkha / Āvarta	Feather + micro-vibration	10-15 s then still	Head work only feather
Apālapa/Apastamba	Cupped rib wave	3-5 exhales	Improves breath
Hṛdaya / Nābhi	Broad palm/spiral	2-3 exhales	No heat + pressure
Ādhipati	Light touch	1-2 exhales	Skip if dizzy

E) After-care & safety

Item	Do	Don't
Heat & pressure	Keep separate over agni/sūkṣma fields	Stack heat + pressure
Re-entry	Seated finish; water sip; slow stand	Jump up quickly
Home	Walk 10 min; 4/6 breath; gentle evening	High-intensity exercise, heavy meal
Refer	Panic attacks, syncope, chest pain, neuro changes -	

Key take-aways

1. Stress first changes **breath, tone, and skin feel**—read these before depth.
2. For relaxation: long, even **Thirumu, pressure 2-4/10**, and **4-6 marma holds** are enough.
3. Breath sets the rhythm; start contact on the **exhale** and lighten on the inhale.
4. Treat marmas as **fields**; be broad and brief over **Hṛdaya/Nābhi/Ādhipati/Basti**.
5. Close sessions slowly and script simple after-care so the nervous system **keeps** the change.