

What to do when you want to cut!

If you cut to express pain and intense emotions

- Paint, draw, or scribble on a big piece of paper with red ink or paint
- Express your feelings in a journal
- Compose a poem or song to say what you feel
- Write down any negative feelings and then rip the paper up
- Listen to music that expresses what you're feeling



If you cut to calm and soothe yourself

- Take a bath or hot shower
- Pet or cuddle with a dog or cat
- Wrap yourself in a warm blanket
- Massage your neck, hands, and feet
- Listen to calming music



If you cut because you feel disconnected and numb

- Call a friend (you don't have to talk about self-harm)
- Take a cold shower
- Hold an ice cube in the crook of your arm or leg
- Chew something with a very strong taste, like chili peppers, peppermint, or a grapefruit peel.
- Go online to a self-help website, chat room, or message board



If you cut to release tension or vent anger

- Exercise vigorously—run, dance, jump rope, or hit a punching bag
- Punch a cushion or mattress or scream into your pillow
- Squeeze a stress ball or squish Play-Doh or clay
- Rip something up (sheets of paper, a magazine)
- Make some noise (play an instrument, bang on pots and pans)



Substitutes for the cutting sensation

- Use a red felt tip pen to mark where you might usually cut
- Rub ice across your skin where you might usually cut
- Put rubber bands on wrists, arms, or legs and snap them instead of cutting or hitting

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/self_injury.htm