

Pranayama Breathing:

LONG, DEEP BREATHING:

BENEFITS

The simplest of all breathing techniques and most natural, the long and deep breathing relieves stress and tension. It reduces toxic buildup in the mucuous linings of the alveoli of the lungs, cleanses the blood and as a result of increased oxygen flow to your brain and body, your health improves in many ways.

TECHNIQUE

Sit in your most comfortable seated position. Relax your shoulders and chest.

Inhale, relaxing the abdomen, pushing your belly forward, expanding it.

Then, as you exhale, allow the abdomen to shrink back in, tightening your belly muscles and pushing the air out.

Do this without straining yourself.

Open up and free up the breath.

You may place one hand on your belly to feel the abdomen expanding and contracting as you inhale and exhale.

Practice in even lengths.

Breathe out for the same length of time as you breathe in.

WHEN TO DO THIS

Before meditation

Before going to bed

Before a meeting, presentation or a big decision

Before studying, before an exam, or an interview

And whenever you can think of --- in the car, at work, or while waiting in line

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING:

BENEFITS

Encourages mind to higher levels of discrimination, concentration and thoughts.

Gives more energy and oxygen to the physical body and helps calm your nerves and improve circulation.

SPECIAL NOTES

For a more advanced technique, consult a yoga teacher or a spiritual teacher.

Your teacher may be able to teach the pranayama technique that will be most beneficial to your mental and physical health and prepare you to complement the pranayama with mantra and meditation. No one should risk harm by practicing these techniques without consulting a trained yoga teacher or a physician.

TECHNIQUE

Sit in a relaxed position, spine straight.

Close your eyes.

Press and close the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand

Draw in a deep breath through the left nostril.

After taking a full breath, close the left nostril with the middle, ring and little finger of your right hand,

taking the thumb away from the right nostril and slowly let the air out, expelling the breath fully.

Inhale through your right nostril

After a full inhalation, close your right nostril with the thumb and release the fingers from your left nostril

and breathe out through your left nostril.

This completes one round.

Begin with three rounds each time and gradually increase rounds as you progress through the weeks.

WHEN AND WHERE TO DO THIS

Do this in a well-ventilated, clean, smoke-free, dust-free, odor-free room.

Do not perform this technique after yoga posture asanas.