

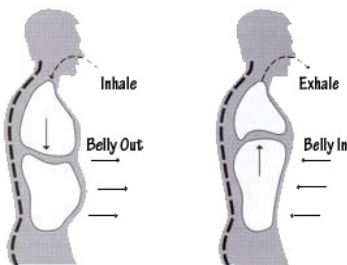
The Science of Upanishads – Part 49: Foundations of Modern Yoga Practice (Contd.): Description of Pranayama (Breath Exercises) (Contd.) as The Fourth Anga (Limb) of The Ashtanga Yoga (Eight Limbed Yoga) of The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

(February 21-February 27, 2018)

Breathing is one of the most natural things we do as humans. It is a gift and a very powerful tool that can enable us to create more ease and balance in our lives. Taking time to focus on the breath allows us to pause from daily stresses, physical symptoms, and emotions that have taken over the mind. It is in that moment where we focus on the breath that we can return to a neutral state of being, gain clarity, feel rejuvenated, and enhance an overall sense of well-being. These are just a few wonderful reasons to invite a pranayama practice into your daily routine. **The last week's Mandir Bulletin described** two important Pranayama exercises, including **Nadhi Sodhana (Anuloma-Viloma) and Kapal Bhati (Skull Shining)**. ***This week, we will study two more important Pranayama exercises: Bhastrika (Bellows Breath Pranayama) and Sheetali (Cooling Pranayama).***

(3). Bhastrika (Bellows Breath) Pranayama: It is a traditional breathing exercise in yoga that helps to increase *Prana* or life force in your being. It's often used to energize the body and clarify the mind. If you feel hazy, or like you're moving in slow motion, *Bhastrika* will help clear the clouds. Bellows breathing is also a practice to consider if you're trying to lose weight. Performing a few rounds throughout the day can help increase your digestive power and boost your metabolism. You probably want to avoid practicing bellows breathing close to bedtime, as it may invigorate your mind and make it difficult to fall asleep. But the next time you need a energy boost, give it a try.

How to Perform Bhastrika (Bellows Breath) Pranayama:



1. Sit up tall, relax your shoulders, and take a few deep, breaths in and out from your nose. With each inhale, expand your belly fully as you breathe.
2. Begin bellows breathing by exhaling forcefully through your nose. Follow by inhaling forcefully at the rate of one second per cycle.

3. Make sure the breath is coming from your diaphragm; keep your head, neck, shoulders, and chest still while your belly moves in and out.

For your first cycle, move through a round of 10 *Bhastrika* breaths, then take a break and breathe naturally, observing the sensations in your mind and body. After a 15- to 30-second break, begin the next round with 20 breaths. Finally, after pausing for another 30 seconds, complete a third round of 30 bellows breaths. Make sure to listen to your body during the practice. Bellows breathing is a safe practice, but if you feel light-headed in any way, take a pause for a few minutes while breathing naturally. When the discomfort passes, try another round of bellows breathing, slower and with less intensity.

(4). Sheetal (Cooling) Pranayama: In summer season, when it is too hot and dry, there are two Pranayamas recommended for bringing coolness to the body. One of them is Sheetal Pranayama. The name itself suggests that it is the cooling Pranayama. This Pranayama is prescribed in old scripture called Hathapradeepika. In yogic Practices, the breathing is always done through the nose only but these cooling Pranayamas are exception to the rule.

How to Perform Sheetal (Cooling) Pranayama:



1. Sit in Padmasana with Drona Mudra. with eyes close.
2. Take the tongue out and make it like half cut pipe by folding both the sides upwards
3. This pipe like tongue is fixed between the upper jaw and lower lips.
4. Inhale air through the pipe like tongue (Pooraka) and take in the tongue and close the mouth.
5. After waiting for 5 seconds (Kumbhaka) slowly exhale through the nostrils (Rechaka)
6. Repeat 5 to 10 rounds to feel the cooling effect

More Pranayama Exercises to Follow.....

Read Here for more on [Bhastrika](#) and [Sheetali](#) Pranayama Exercises.