

Sheetali Pranayama

Sheetali means cooling and is a pranayama (breathing technique) which cools the body and mind.

In this pranayama, air is slowly inhaled through the mouth and exhaled through both the nostrils. This cools the whole body and at the same time relaxes the central nervous system.

Directions:

1. Sit comfortably with a straight spine.
2. Curl or roll the sides of your tongue upward into a tube or "straw" for sucking in air. If you are unable to roll your tongue into a tube, line the upper and lower teeth together, smile wide and press the tongue against the lower row of teeth.
3. Inhale slowly through the rolled tongue or teeth (notice the cooler temperature of the air upon inhaling), hold the breath and close the mouth, then exhale through the nose.
4. Repeat 30-50 breaths.
5. Make sure that you inhale deeply into the lower lobes of the lungs expanding the abdomen (belly breathing). This is a more cooling way of breathing.

Benefits:

- This practice has great energizing, soothing, relaxing and cooling effects on all nerve channels in the body.
- It purifies the blood and expels toxins.
- Has a relieving effect on indigestion, acidity, thirst, skin diseases, fever, hypertension, jaundice and tumors.
- It harmonizes the secretions of reproductive organs and all of the endocrine system.
- Its cooling effect calms the mind and enhances patience and tolerance thus reducing anger, anxiety and stress.

Caution:

- ❖ Avoid this pranayama in extreme cold weather.
- ❖ Avoid during cold, cough, asthma, arthritis, low blood pressure or chronic constipation.

