

# CLASS-I

Lesson 1 Breathing Practices

Lesson 2 Introduction to Yogic Sukhsma Vyayama

Lesson 3 Sthula Vyayama





## 1

# BREATHING PRACTICES

Breathing exercises are systematic practices, which include physical movements with breath awareness. These exercises refresh our body and mind and allow the body to get the much needed fresh air. These encompass the movements of hands, legs, abdominal and chest muscles. These practices help to loosen our joints and prepare us for further yogic practices. Breathing exercises lead to more efficient lungs, which means more oxygen being brought into contact with blood being sent to the lungs by the heart.



## OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the importance of breathing practices;
- practice the normal breath rate to make the breathing uniform, continuous and rhythmic;
- demonstrate good breathing exercise leading to an increase in the lung capacity;



Notes

- observe the correct; use "in and out" instructions in the mind for inhalation and exhalation;
- synchronize breathing with corresponding correct movements correctly; and
- relate to the movement of air filling and emptying of the lungs.

## 1.1 IMPORTANCE OF BREATHING PRACTICES

As you know breathing is vital for our survival for it is the only way we can supply oxygen to our body and to our organs. We can live for months without consuming food and a few days without water. However we can only survive a few minutes without breathing. After learning about breathing practices you will observe a positive affect on your actions and thoughts.

### **Breathing includes two actions :**

1. Inhaling or taking air
2. Exhaling or releasing out the inhaled air

### **General guidelines for breathing practices :**

1. Breathe in a uniform and continuous manner
2. Breathing should be in rhythm and synchronezed with the body movements
3. Focus and notice the inovement of air filling into the body and being released from the body. Be mindful of your breath.



## **I. Guidelines for performing breathing practices in standing posture**

### **Starting position (Sthiti): Tadasana**

Tadasana or mountain pose is the basic standing pose for this :

- Start by standing straight and keeping both your feet together.
- Slowly raise your hands slightly with your palms facing inwards.
- Keep both your both the feet firmly together.
- Expand your chest steady and straighten the head with normal breathing.

### **II. Relaxation pose of standing posture: Shithila Tadasana**

After completing any standing exercise or Asana, follow it up with the relaxation pose called Shithila Tadasa, for this :

- Stand straight and keep your legs apart relaxed.
- Let your hands hang free and relax your body with normal breathing.
- Keep your eyes closed and observe the changes in your body.

## **III. Initial guidelines for performing breathing practices in sitting posture**

### **For starting position or (Sthiti) of sitting posture: (Dandaasana)**

- i. Sit with both legs stretched in front with heels together.
- ii. Place the palms on the floor by the side of the buttocks.



Notes

- iii. Keep the spine, neck and head erect.
- iv. Close the eyes and do normal breathing.

#### **IV. For Shithila (Relaxation) of sitting posture: Shithila Dandasana**

- i. Sit relaxed with legs stretched apart.
- ii. Slightly incline the trunk backwards, supporting the body by placing the hands behind.
- iii. Fingers point backwards.
- iv. Let the head hang freely behind or rest on either side of the shoulder.
- v. Gently close the eyes and breathe normally.



#### **INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1**

1. .... pose is the standing pose for breathing.
2. Relaxation pose for sitting posture is called.....

#### **1.2 HANDS IN AND OUT BREATHING**

Hands in and out breathing is a very simple breathing exercise, in which inhalation and exhalation takes place with hands movement. This practice increases your breathing and lung capacity.

**Initial guidelines for performing Hands In and Out Breathing**

- To start these practices first stand in Tadasana.
- Bring your both palms together.
- Now inhaling, slowly spread your arms sideways horizontally.
- While exhaling slowly bring your arms in front of your chest with palms touching each other.
- This completes one round of the practice. Practice this for ten rounds.
- Remember your arms movements should synchronize continuously with your breath rhythmically.
- Stop practicing after completing ten rounds and come to Shithila Tadasana.

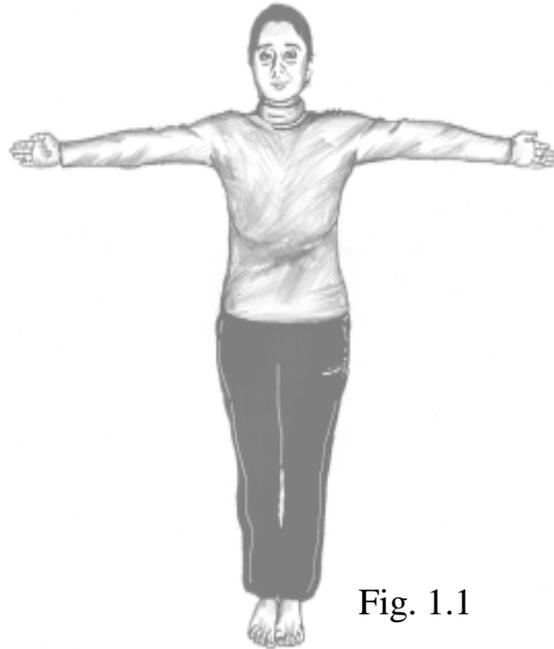


Fig. 1.1

**Notes****? DO YOU KNOW**

Breathing practice is a simple and easy practice that can help mobilize your joints and strengthen the muscles.



Notes

### 1.3 HANDS STRETCH BREATHING

#### Initial guidelines for performing Hands Stretch Breathing

- To start this practice first stand in Tadasana.
- Gently bring your hands in front of the chest and interlock your fingers.
- Place the interlocked hands on the chest. Collapse and relax your shoulders.
- Close your eyes and breathe normally.



Fig. 1.2

#### Variation 1: Horizontal

- Slowly inhale and stretch your arms straight out in front of your body. Let your arms be at shoulder level.
- Slowly twist your hands and let your palms face outwards. Fully stretch the arms and inhale.
- While exhaling reverse the process and bring the palms back on to the chest and collapse the shoulders again.
- This is completes one round. Practice this for five rounds.
- Remember your arms movements it should synchronize continuously with your breath rhythmically.



Fig. 2.3

- After completing five rounds come to Shithila Tadasana posture.

**Variation 2: Fore head level**

- Repeat the same movements now stretching the arms above to the forehead level.
- Practice this for five rounds.
- Remember, your arms movements should synchronize continuously with your breath rhythmically.
- After completing five rounds come to Shithila Tadasana.



Fig. 1.4



Fig. 1.5

**Variation 3: Above your head**

- Again repeat the same practice stretching your arms vertically above your head.
- While moving your hands up and down for inhaling and exhaling, bring palms close to the nose tip.
- Practice this for five rounds.



Fig. 1.6

**Notes**



Notes

- Remember, your arms movements should synchronize continuously with your breath rhythmically.
- After completing five rounds come to Shithila Tadasana.

## 1.4 ANKLES STRETCH BREATHING

### Guidelines for performing Ankles Stretch Breathing

- First stand in Tadasana.
- Gently open your eyes and fix your gaze on a point on the wall in front of you.
- Slowly place the palms on front of your thighs.
- While inhaling, raise your hands and stretch the ankles.
- As you exhale, bring your hands and heels down.



Fig. 1.7



Fig. 1.8

- Repeat this practice for ten times.
- Remember, your arms movements should synchronize continuously with your breath rhythmically.
- After completing ten rounds come to Shithila Tadasana.



**Notes**



### **INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2**

1. Name three variations in Hands Stretch breathing.
2. While Ankle Stretch Breathing, raise your hands and stretch.....

### **1.5 TIGER BREATHING**

Guidelines for performing Tiger breathing

- To start this practice first come to Dandasana. (Sthiti)
- Imitate breathing like a Tiger.
- Slowly sit in Vajrasana and lean forward.

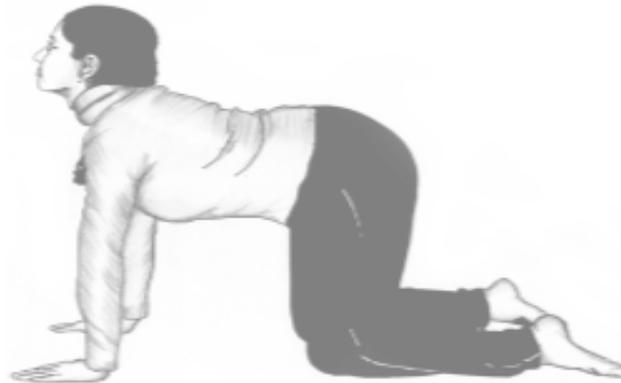


Fig. 1.9



Notes



Fig. 1.10

- Now place your hands flat on the floor in line with the shoulders with fingers pointing outwards.
- Keep your arms, thighs and heels about one shoulder width apart.
- The arms and thighs should be perpendicular to the floor.
- Before starting the practice ensure that you are comfortable while standing on "all-fours" (i.e., two hands and two knees).
- Now while inhaling slowly raise your head and look up.
- Simultaneously lower the spine making it concave.
- While exhaling, arch the spine upwards and bend the head downward bringing the chin towards the chest.
- This completes one round of tiger breathing. Practice it for five rounds.

**DO YOU KNOW**

The normal respiration rate of tiger during rest is 10 to 30 breaths per minute. Practice doing 10 to 30 breathes per minute.

## 1.6 DOG BREATHING

Guidelines for performing Dog breathing

- To begin this practice, first come to Dandasana Sthiti.
- Imagine how the dog forcefully pants and breathes out, and imitate to sit like a dog.
- Place the palms of the hands on the ground beside the knees.
- Make the spine slightly concave and fix the gaze straight ahead.
- The mouth should be opened wide; the tongue to be pushed out to its maximum. Practice rapid, forceful inhalation and exhalation, expanding and contracting the abdomen vigorously.
- Repeat the practice for 30 seconds.
- Relax in Vajrasana.



Fig. 1.11

Notes



### DO YOU KNOW

The normal respiration rate of dog during rest is 10 to 35 breaths per minute. Practice doing 10 to 35 breathes per minute.

## 1.7 RABBIT BREATHING

Initial guidelines for performing Rabbit breathing

- First come to Dandasana Sthiti.
- Imagine how the Rabbit is panting and breathing in and out, and imitate, sitting like a Rabbit.
- Keeping the knees together, bend forward and rest the forearms on the floor, keeping the elbows by the side of the knees and palms flat on the ground.
- Maintain the head at a distance of one hand length from the ground (to chin). Open your mouth partially. Protrude the tongue partially. Touch the lower lip with the tongue, resting the tongue on the lower set of teeth.
- Gaze at a point about 2 feet on the ground ahead of you.
- Pant quickly like a rabbit, using only the upper part of the chest. Feel the air moving beautifully in and out of the lungs. Feel the expansion and contraction of the chest muscles. Continue for 20 to 40 breaths.
- Close your mouth and relax in Vajrasana. Stretch your hands forward with the forehead resting on the ground. Feel the relaxation of chest. Allow your breath to return to normal



Fig. 1.12

Notes

**? DO YOU KNOW**

The normal respiration rate of rabbit during rest is 30 to 60 breaths per minute. Practice doing 30 to 60 breathes per minute.



Notes



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.3**

1. What do you understand by being on all fours in Tiger breathing practice?
2. In dog breathing practice tongue should be pushed out to its minimum (True/False)



**WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT**

In this unit, you have learnt some of the breathing practices :

- the need and importance of breathing;
- ways of making the breathing uniform, continuous and rhythmic;
- need to develop attentiveness on breathing;
- to relax yourself after each breathing practice, to calm you down and make feel good.

Apart from this you learnt six different types of breathing practices namely :

- Breathing practice while standing and sitting
- Hands in and out breathing
- Hands stretch breathing
- Ankles stretch breathing



Notes

- Tiger breathing
- Dog breathing
- Rabbit breathing



## TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. While breathing practices, what should you emphasize on?
2. How does the breathing practices benefit you?
3. Compare the breath count in Tiger, Dog and Rabbit breathing exercise?



## ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

### 1.1

1. Tadasana
2. Shithila Dandasana

### 1.2

1. Variation1: Horizontal  
Variation2: Fore head level  
Variation3: Above your head
- 2 Ankles

### 1.3

1. On two hands and two knees like a dog sitting
2. Maximum