

## How to perform Alternate Nostril Breathing

### ANULOM VILOM PRANAYAMA (ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING)



Alternate Nostril Breathing or Anuloma Viloma is a Pranayama or breathing technique to help calm emotions.

#### How to do Anuloma Viloma:

1. Sit in chair or in easy pose.
2. Close the right nostril with your thumb and draw in air from the left nostril. Do this as slowly as you can, till your lungs are full.
3. Now release the thumb and close the left nostril with your ring finger. Then breathe out slowly through the right nostril.
4. Next take the air in from the right nostril and then release it through the left nostril (after closing the right nostril with the thumb).
5. This is one round of *Anulom Vilom* Pranayama.
6. Start with 5 rounds and increase it up to 20 rounds in one sitting.
7. Also, the duration of inhalation can start from 2 seconds and go up to 20 seconds or even beyond.
8. One can have one sitting in the morning and one in the evening. For advanced practitioners, the yogic texts recommends four sittings – one in the morning, one at noon, one in the evening and one at midnight. But for all practical purposes, two sittings (one in morning and one in evening) are enough.

## Benefits

- Cleanses and strengthens the lungs and entire respiratory system and balance the nervous system.
- Helps to calm the mind, good for staying mentally healthy, clearing the mind and your thoughts.
- Reduces insomnia, and mental and physical stress.
- It helps in concentration and focusing and boosting memory power.
- It helps control one's temper and prevent outbursts of anger.
- With its general calming effect, it also 'calms down' your heartbeat which is why it is also helpful for high blood pressure.
- Provides more oxygen to the brain through this increased blood flow
- As it increases the blood flow in the head, it is good for eyes, ears and nose

**Focus Points:** Close your eyes while performing the pranayama and focus within your body

**Tips and Help:** In this breathing technique you should not hold your breath. Concentrate on relaxing and breathing continuously in a steady rhythm. Don't take too big a breath as you may hyperventilate- just breath in and out. It is a great exercise that you could even do at work – whether during usual working hours or in your lunch break!