



Ayurveda Pranayama & Chakras

What is Pranayama?

The practice of becoming aware of your breath and using it to enhance your physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being



- *Pranayama*
prana = vital life force
ayama = to expand, draw out, control
- Using the breath to expand life-force energy and improve communication among all parts of body-mind

Positively Influences Health

- By controlling the breath, we can train ourselves to breathe in a way that positively influences our health
- Our thoughts affect our breathing
- Our breathing influences our thoughts and physiology
- When the mind is calm, breathing is deep and rhythmic, and the body engages in its natural self-repair, self-healing mechanisms



The Benefits of Pranayama

There is a growing body of scientific research documenting the benefits of practicing pranayama on a regular basis, including:

- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Lower/stabilized blood pressure
- Increased energy levels
- Muscle relaxation
- Decreased feelings of stress and being overwhelmed

Scientific Research

The following studies offer additional information on pranayama's benefits:

- Sudarshan Kriya yogic breathing in the treatment of stress, anxiety, and depression: part 1-neurophysiologic model.” RP Brown, et al.
- “Stress Management: Approaches for preventing and reducing stress.” Harvard Medical School.
- “Yoga breathing, meditation, and longevity.” RP Brown, et al.
- “Breathing-based meditation decreases posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in US military veterans: a randomized controlled longitudinal study.” EM Seppala, et al.

Coherence Breathing

Healing Benefits



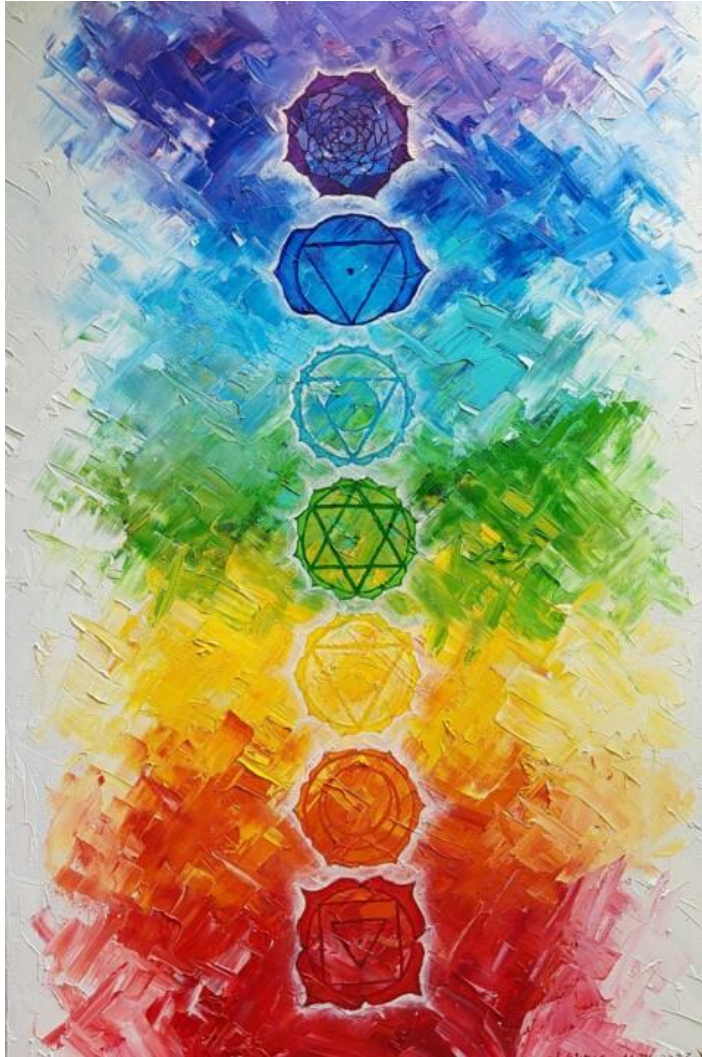
- Decreases anxiety and depression
- Improves sleep
- Strengthens immune function
- Reduces inflammation
- Increases resilience
- This practice is recommended for all doshas

To receive the full benefits, practice mindfully, then relax and sit quietly for a few moments before slowly resuming activity

Coherence Breathing

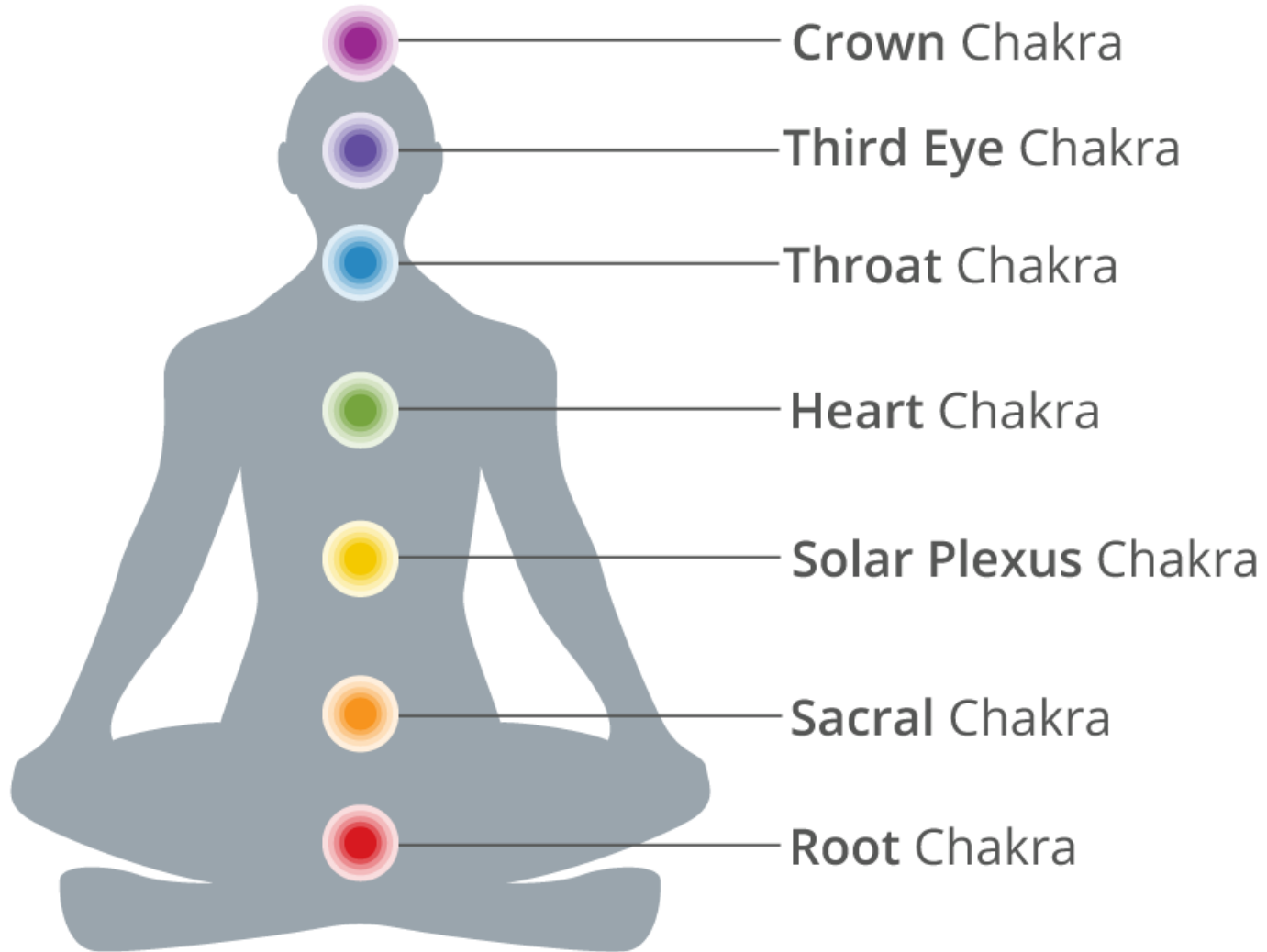
- Sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor. The eyes may be opened or closed.
- Place the hands on the belly if that feels comfortable. This will allow you to feel the belly move out on the inhale and in on the exhale.
- Relax the belly to let the breathing be effortless.
- Inhale, letting the belly expand into the hands for a count of four; then exhale, letting the belly gently draw in to a count of five. Repeat this pattern.
- Continue in this way for another three or four breaths.

Chakras



- Chakra means “wheel”
- Originated in India over 4,000 years ago
- Seven chakras stacked from base of spine to top of the head that are energetic activity
- They are not physical in our bodies, but have a physical location

Chakras



Root - Muladhara

Central Issue:

- Survival

Balanced:

- Stability
- Grounding
- Trust

Location:

- Base of spine



Mantra:

- Lam

Deficient:

- Fear
- Greed
- Restless

Color:

- Red

Sacral - Svadhisthana

Central Issue:

- Sexuality
- Emotions

Balanced:

- Fluidity
- Pleasure

Location:

- Abdomen
- Genitals
- Hips



Mantra:

- Vam

Deficient:

- Overly emotional
- Rigid
- Attachments

Color:

- Orange

Nadi Shodhana

Relaxing Breath:

nadi (channel of circulation) *shodhana* (cleansing)



- Clears emotional blockages and toxins
- Infuses the body-mind with energy and oxygen
- Harmonizes the brain's left and right hemispheres
- Reduces feelings of anxiety
- Improves stress management and sleep
- Benefits all doshas and is particularly good for Vata and Kapha doshas

To receive the full benefits, practice for five to ten full rounds each day, consciously and mindfully, before each meditation and whenever you want to cultivate a sense of calm and balance

Nadi Shodhana

- Sit comfortably with a straight spine with your left hand comfortably on your lap.
- Rest the tip of the index finger and middle finger of your right hand in between the eyebrows.
- Close off the right nostril with the thumb. Inhale slowly through the left nostril to the top of the breath. Then use the ring and pinky fingers to close off the left nostril.
- Release the thumb and slowly exhale through the right nostril to the bottom of the breath. Then inhale through the right nostril to the top of the breath.
- Next, place the thumb back over the right nostril, and release the ring and pinky fingers to exhale through the left nostril to the bottom of the breath.
- Repeat this pattern for a few rounds.

Solar Plexus - Manipura

Central Issue:

- Power
- Will

Balanced:

- Vitality
- Purpose
- Self Esteem

Location:

- Solar plexus



Mantra:

- Ram

Deficient:

- Controlling
- Weak will
- Passive

Color:

- Yellow

Heart - Anahata

Central Issue:

- Love
- Relationships

Balanced:

- Compassion
- Self acceptance
- Relationships

Location:

- Heart area



Mantra:

- Yam

Deficient:

- Jealous
- Lonely
- Bitter

Color:

- Green

Ujjayi

Victorious Breath

- Gentle and rhythmic breath produces a pleasant, soothing sound, similar to the sound of ocean waves
- Energizes, calms, and cools the body-mind
- Releases feelings of irritation or frustration
- Creates a stabilizing influence on the cardiorespiratory system
- Benefits all doshas, and because of its cooling effect, it is especially beneficial for the Pitta dosha

To receive the full benefits, practice for five to ten full rounds each day, consciously and mindfully.

Ujjayi

- Sit comfortably with a straight spine, shoulders relaxed, hands comfortably in the lap.
- With the mouth gently closed, take an inhalation through the nose that is slightly deeper than normal.
- Next, gently constrict the muscles at the back of the throat and exhale through the nose. This should produce a sound similar to the waves of the ocean.
- Keeping the throat muscles constricted, inhale again through the nose and exhale through the nose. Repeat this pattern several times.
- Another way to master this type of breath is to exhale the sound “haaaaaa” with the mouth open, as if trying to fog up a mirror. Now, make this same sound with the mouth closed, which will give the desired sound.

Throat - Vissudha

Central Issue:

- Communication

Balanced:

- Clear communication
- Creativity
- Resonance

Location:

- Throat



Mantra:

- Ham

Deficient:

- Inability to Listen
- Fear of speaking

Color:

- Blue

Third Eye - Ajna

Central Issue:

- Intuition
- Imagination

Balanced:

- Accurate
- Imagination
- Clear seeing

Location:

- Brow



Mantra:

- Sam

Deficient:

- Poor memory
- Difficulty concentrating
- Denial

Color:

- Indigo

Sitali

Cooling Pranayama Practice

- Effective to use when the body or mind feels overheated
- Lowers the body's temperature
- Calms the nervous system
- Settles the mind
- Because of its cooling effect, it is especially beneficial for the Pitta dosha

Sitali

- Sit comfortably with a straight spine.
- Roll your tongue, curling the sides in towards the center to form a tube and extend out of the mouth. If you don't have the "tongue-curling" gene, you can receive the same cooling benefit by practicing a variation called *sitkari*.
- Inhale through the tongue as though drinking through a straw.
- Bring the tongue into the mouth and close the mouth, exhaling through the nostrils.

Crown - Sahasrara

Central Issue:

- Awareness

Balanced:

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Consciousness

Location:

- Top of head



Mantra:

- Om (Aum)

Deficient:

- Confusion
- Limited beliefs
- Learning difficulties

Color:

- Violet

Arohan Awarohan

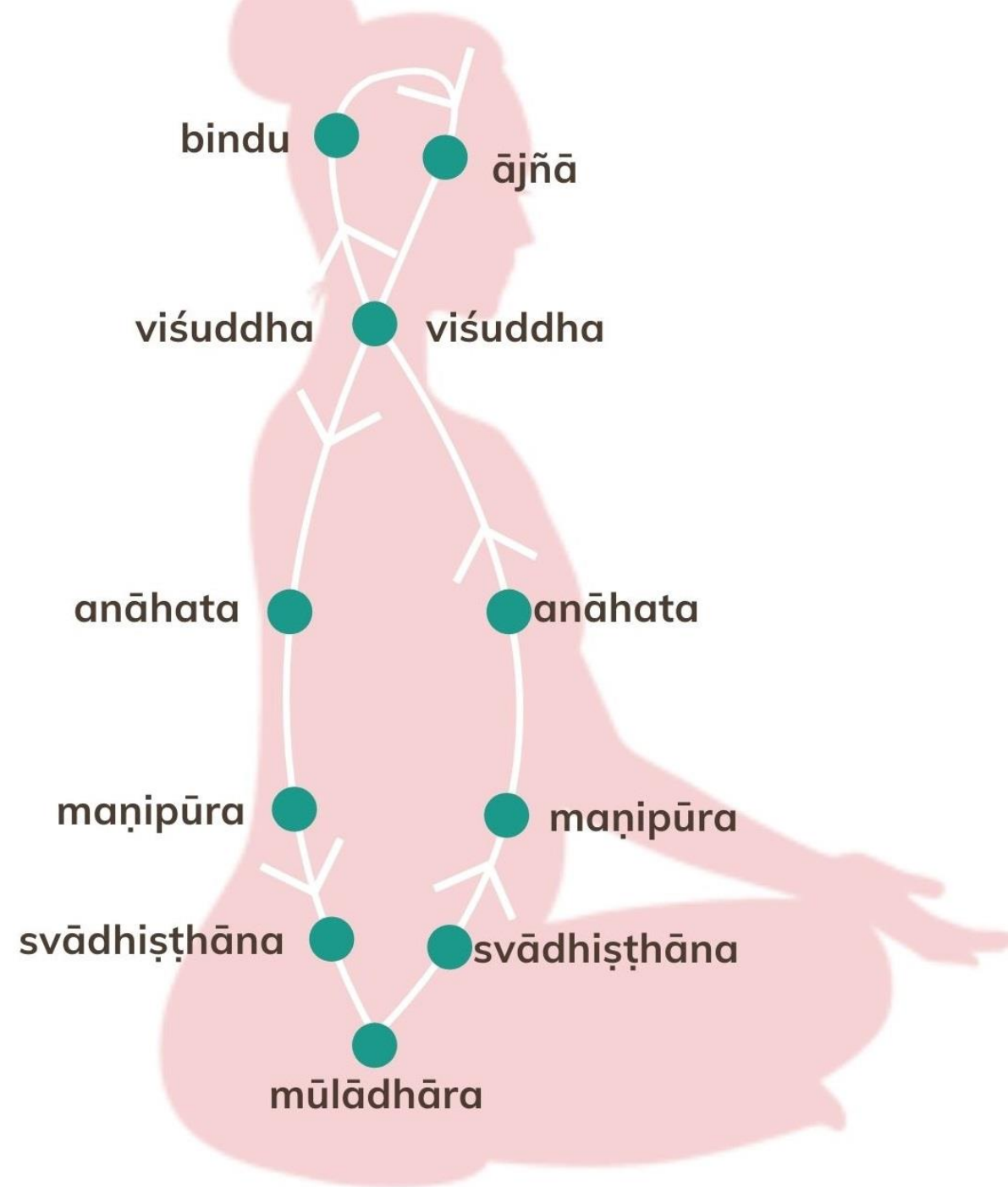
Ascending and Descending

- Two main passages – front and back of body
- Balancing front and back (chakras)
- Coherence breath
- Helps keep us in our own truth
- Connect to our authentic self

Arohan Awarohan

Ascending and Descending

- Sit comfortably with a straight spine.
- On inhalation feel the breath move from base of spine, up the front of the body, to the throat, to back of the head, to top of the head, and lower to the middle of the brain.
- On the exhalation, the awareness moves from the middle of the brain, straight back to the C7 vertebra (back of neck), down the back, past the tailbone to the root chakra



Enlivening Health

- Observe how your breathing is affected by your thoughts, and your thoughts and physiology are influenced by your breath.
- Live in gratitude for the primordial vital force that sustains you in every moment of your life.
- There are also breathing apps you can download and practice with.
- Always remember to move through pranayama exercises slowly and mindfully in order to receive the full benefits.



In Closing - Intentions

- Joyful, Energetic Body
- Loving, Compassionate Heart
- Clear, Focused Mind
- Peace, Internal & Surrounding

