

# Bhastrika Pranayama

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**Bhastrika Pranayama** (भस्त्रिका प्राणायाम), often called "Bellows Breath," is a powerful yogic breathing technique that energises the body and mind. The term "Bhastrika" comes from the Sanskrit word for "bellows," symbolising the forceful movement of air in and out of the lungs, similar to a blacksmith's bellows.

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## Steps to Practice Bhastrika

### 1. Preparation:

- Sit comfortably in a meditative posture like Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Vajrasana, keeping your spine erect.
- Relax your shoulders and place your hands on your knees.

### 2. The Breathing Technique:

- Inhale deeply and forcefully through both nostrils, expanding your chest and filling your lungs.
- Exhale forcefully and completely through both nostrils, contracting your abdominal muscles.

### 3. Rhythm:

- Perform this cycle of forceful inhalation and exhalation at a steady pace. Start with 10–15 breaths per round.
  - After completing a round, take a few normal breaths and then begin the next round.
  - Practice 2–3 rounds, depending on your comfort level.
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## Key Points:

- Both inhalation and exhalation should be equally forceful and rhythmic.
  - Maintain a focus on the movement of your breath and chest expansion.
  - Begin slowly if you're new to the practice, and gradually increase the speed and duration.
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## Benefits of Bhastrika Pranayama

### 1. Boosts Energy Levels:

- Revitalises the body and mind, making it an excellent practice to combat fatigue.
2. **Cleanses the Lungs:**
    - Improves oxygen intake and removes stale air and toxins from the lungs.
  3. **Enhances Circulation:**
    - Promotes better blood flow, ensuring the efficient delivery of oxygen and nutrients throughout the body.
  4. **Balances the Nervous System:**
    - Calms the mind while simultaneously increasing alertness and focus.
  5. **Stimulates Metabolism:**
    - Activates the digestive system and enhances metabolic functions.
  6. **Relieves Stress:**
    - Helps release pent-up emotions and stress, fostering a sense of relaxation.
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#### **Precautions:**

- Avoid if you have high blood pressure, heart problems, or respiratory conditions like asthma.
  - Not suitable during pregnancy or menstruation.
  - Practice on an empty stomach or at least 3–4 hours after a meal.
  - If you feel dizzy or uncomfortable, stop immediately and rest.
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#### **Difference Between Bhastrika and Kapalabhati:**

- In **Bhastrika**, both inhalation and exhalation are forceful, whereas in **Kapalabhati**, only exhalation is forceful, and inhalation is passive.
- Bhastrika focuses more on energising the body, while Kapalabhati emphasises detoxification and abdominal strengthening.

Bhastrika is a dynamic pranayama that helps cultivate vitality, purify the body, and prepare the mind for deeper yogic practices.