

Kapalabhat

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Kapalabhati (कपालभाति) is a dynamic pranayama (breathing technique) in yoga, known as "Shining Skull Breath." The name is derived from two Sanskrit words:

- **Kapala:** Skull
- **Bhati:** Light or shine

This practice is said to energise the mind and body, cleanse the respiratory system, and purify the nadis (energy channels).

Steps to Practice Kapalabhati

1. Preparation:

- Sit in a comfortable posture (e.g., Sukhasana or Padmasana) with a straight spine.
- Rest your hands on your knees in Gyan Mudra (thumb and index finger touching).

2. Breathing Technique:

- Inhale deeply through both nostrils, filling your lungs with air.
- Exhale forcefully and actively through the nose, pulling your abdominal muscles inward toward the spine.
- The inhalation will be passive and automatic, while the exhalation is sharp and forceful.

3. Rhythm:

- Perform 20–30 exhalations in a round, followed by a deep breath in and out. This completes one round.
- Rest for a few seconds and repeat for 2–3 rounds.

Key Points:

- Keep the spine erect and shoulders relaxed throughout the practice.
 - Focus on exhalation as the active movement; inhalation should occur naturally.
 - Start slowly, especially if you are new to the practice, and increase the pace and duration gradually.
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Benefits of Kapalabhati**1. Cleanses the Respiratory System:**

- Removes toxins and stale air from the lungs.
- Improves lung capacity and efficiency.

2. Energises the Mind and Body:

- Activates the brain's frontal lobe, promoting mental clarity and alertness.
- Boosts energy levels and reduces lethargy.

3. Strengthens Abdominal Muscles:

- Tones and strengthens the diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

4. Detoxifies the Body:

- Enhances blood circulation, promoting the removal of toxins.

5. Improves Digestion:

- Stimulates the digestive organs and improves metabolism.

6. Balances and Calms the Mind:

- Helps reduce stress and anxiety.
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Precautions:

- Avoid if you have high blood pressure, heart problems, or respiratory conditions like asthma.
- Not recommended during pregnancy or menstruation.
- Practice on an empty stomach or at least 3–4 hours after a meal.
- Stop immediately if you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.

Kapalabhati is often included as a preparatory practice for other pranayama or meditation techniques, helping to purify the mind and body and prepare for deeper states of awareness.

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