# PRANAYAMA

Surya bheda, Chandra bheda, Ujjayi, Sheetali, Sheetkari

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## 8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will able to know

- about the meaning of pranayama.
- about the goal and purpose of pranayama.
- about the types of pranayama.
- about the benefits of practicing pranayama.
- what precautions should be taken while practicing Pranayama.

## 8.2 INTRODUCTION

The unit entitled “Pranayama” is the eighth unit of this course. Pranayama is made up of two words – Prana and Aayam. Prana means life force. Prana is found in all living beings. Prana is the energy that is present in the entire universe. Prana contains energy,

vigour, brilliance, semen (power), and life-giving energy. Whereas Aayam means expansion, spread, regulation, or control.Therefore, Pranayama means expansion, prolongation, and control of Prana, i.e., breathing (life force).

Pranayama has a special place and importance in yoga Sadhana. In the yoga sutra of Maharishi Patanjali, Pranayama is the fourth component of the Ashtanga yoga. Maharishi Patanjali has described it in the 49th verse of Sadhanapada as follows: -

“tasmin sati śvāsa-praśvāsayorgati-vicchedahprānāyāmah”

After the asana is perfected, the process of inhaling and exhaling is controlled; that is, the rising and falling of the breath is called Pranayama.

In this chapter, we will learn about 5 Pranayamas-Suryabheda, Chandrabheda, Ujjayi, Sheetali, and Sheetkari Pranayama.

## 8.3 GOAL AND PURPOSE OF PRANAYAMA

Pranayama is a method of developing control over the mind, mental stability, peace, and concentration. Its practice makes meditation easier. Pranayama makes it possible to create physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual strength. Along with this, the practice of pranayama facilitates the awakening of the six chakras, and pranayama is helpful in the prevention of preventing many types of diseases.

The mind is also controlled by controlling the prana because the prana is the link between the body and the mind. Pranayama purifies the mind, and when the mind is purified, knowledge appears, which is the main objective of yoga practice. The master of the senses is the mind and the mind are controlled by the prana. Therefore, the one who wants to become a conqueror of senses should practice Pranayama. Pranayama expands and regulates the prana and prana has special importance in human life.

## 8.4 TECHNIQUES, BENEFITS AND PRECAUTIONSOF PRANAYAMA

**8.4.1 SURYABHEDA PRANAYAMA:**The term “Surya” is a Sanskrit word meaning “Sun” which refers to pingalanadi, while “bheda” translates to “to pierce,” “pass through,” or “awaken”. Surya bheda, then, means to pierce or purify pingalanadi.

**Sthiti:** Dhyanasana

**Techniques**:






- Sitin Dhyanasana (Sukhasana, padamasana, Siddhasanaetc), Comfortable and calm.
- Close your eyes. Make a pranayama mudra (Close Index and middle finger) with your right hand. From the Anamika (Ring Finger), Close your left nostril. Now, slowly and deeply inhale through the right nostril.After the Inhalation, retain the breath as per your capacity.Now close the right nostril using the thumb and exhale slowly through the left nostril. This is one round of Surya bheda Pranayama.

**Benefits:**This practice increases the digestion fire and improves Digestion. Creates heat in the body.Vata and kapha are pacified.Sinuses become clean and clear. Regular practice is helpful for low blood pressure. Skin disorders are cured. Removes wrinkles and increasesfacial glow. Purify the head region. Destroy disease related to vata.

**Precautions:** Avoid this practice during the summer season. People suffering from heart disease, hypertension, epilepsy, hyperthyroidism, peptic ulcer, acidity or anxiety should not practice this pranayama.

**8.4.2 CHANDRABHEDA PRANAYAMA**: The term “Chandra” is a Sanskrit word meaning “moon” which refers to idanadi, while “bheda” translates to “to pierce,” “pass through,” or “awaken”. Chandrabheda, then, means to pierce or purify idanadi.

**Sthiti:** Dhyanasana

**Techniques:** Sit in Dhyanasana (Sukhasana, padamasana, Siddhasana, etc), Comfortable and calm, close your eyes. Make a pranayama mudra (Close Index and middle finger) from your right hand. From the Thumb, Close your right nostril. Now, slowly and deeply inhale from the left nostril. After the Inhalation, retain the breath as per your capacity. Now, close the left nostril using your Ring finger (Anamika) and exhale slowly through the right nostril. This is one round of Chandrabheda Pranayama.

**Benefits:** This practice reduces the bile in the body. Makes the body cool and reduce pitta dosh. Provides mental peace, reduces anger, reduces stress and makes the mind happy.Helps in increasing memory. Regular practice is helpful in High blood pressure. Beneficial in the summer season.






**Precautions:** Avoid this practiceduring cold days. People with low blood pressure should not practice this pranayama.

### 8.4.3 UJJAYI PRANAYAMA:

“Ujjayi” is a Sanskrit word meaning “victorious”. It comprises the root 'ji', which means 'to conquer' and the prefix 'ud', which means 'bondage'. Thus, Ujjayi is the pranayama, thatliberates from bondage.**Sthiti:** Dhyanasana**Techniques:** Sit in Dhyanasana (Sukhasana, padamasana, Siddhasana, etc), Comfortable and calm. Close your eyes. Now close your mouth.Inhale throughbothnostrils and partially contract the glottis, producing a snoring sound in the throat. This should be continued until the breath is complete. After the Inhalation, retain the breath as per your capacity. Nowclose the right nostril using the thumb and exhale slowly through the left nostril.This is one round of Ujjayi Pranayama. This practice can be done while walking, standing, sitting, or lying down in any position.



**Benefits:** This practice increasesthe gastric fire. This removes throat diseases caused by phlegm (kapha).It cures all diseases related to nerve disease, dropsy and all diseases related to dhatu. This practice calms the nervous system and the mind. The practice of Ujjayi Pranayama slows down the heart rate, so it is beneficial for high blood pressure patients. Benefits to patients suffering from insomnia, mental anxiety and hysteria.Diseases like rheumatism, tuberculosis, cough; fever, spleen, bad wind etc. are also cured.

**Precautions:** Introverted people should not practice this pranayama.People suffering from heart disease should not applyBandha or breath retentionwith this pranayama.

### 8.4.4 SHEETALI PRANAYAMA:

The term “Sheet” is a Sanskrit word meaning “cold”. So Sheetali is such a pranayama which cools down.

**Sthiti:** Dhyanasana

**Techniques:** Sit in Dhyanasana (Sukhasana, padamasana, Siddhasana etc), comfortably and calm. Close your eyes. Keep the spine, head and neck in a straight line. Place both the hands on the knees. Take out the tongue from the mouth and roll the tongue like a tube.Now inhaleslowly through the mouth (rolled tongue).After the Inhalation, close the mouth and retain the breath as per your capacity. Now exhale slowly through both nostril. This is one round of sheetali Pranayama.

**Benefits:** This practice removes the pitta dosha. Regular practice of this pranayama does not causeDigestive disease and disorders of kapha and pitta. It reduces the body heat. This pranayama calms down mental and emotional excitement.With the regular practice of this Pranayama, the practitioner starts controlling his hunger and thirst.

**Precautions:** Avoid this practice during the winter season or in cool climates. People suffering from low blood pressure, chronic constipation and excessive phlegm should not practice this.

**8.4.5 SHEETKARI PRANAYAMA:** The term “Sheet” is a Sanskrit word meaning “cold” and “kari” meansproducing or causing. So, Sheetkari is such a pranayama that produces coolness.

**Sthiti:** Dhyanasana

**Techniques:** Sit in Dhyanasana (Sukhasana, padamasana, Siddhasana, etc), Comfortable and calm. Close your eyes. Keep the spine, head, and neck in a straight line. Place both handsboth hands on the knees. After that, both the jaws should be joined together. Now inhale deeply through the gaps in your teeth, producing hissing sound. After the Inhalation, close the mouth and retain the breath as per your capacity.



Now exhale slowly through both nostrils. This is one round of sheetkari Pranayama.

**Benefits:** This practice removes the pitta dosha. Regular practice of this pranayama does not cause Digestive disease and disorders of kapha and pitta. It reduces the body heat. This pranayama calms down mental and emotional excitement. With the regular

practice of this Pranayama, the practitioner starts controlling his hunger and thirst. It is helpful in reducing blood pressure andacidity of the stomach.

**Precautions:** Avoid this practice during the winter season or in cool climates. People suffering from low blood pressure, chronic constipation and excessive phlegm should not practice this. People with Vaata nature should not practice this.People with sensitive teeth or missing teeth may practice sheetali Pranayama instead.

## Check Your Progress Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the term “Pranayama”?
2. Who described Pranayama as the fourth component of Ashtanga Yoga?
3. Write the Sanskrit verse from the Yogasutra that defines Pranayama.
4. Explain the technique of performing Surya Bheda Pranayama.
5. What are the benefits of Chandra Bheda Pranayama?
6. What precautions should be taken while practicing Ujjayi Pranayama?
7. How is Sheetali Pranayama different from Sheetkari Pranayama?
8. Which type of Pranayama is beneficial for reducing body heat?
9. Why should people with low blood pressure avoid practicing Sheetali and Sheetkari Pranayama?
10. How does the practice of Pranayama control the mind?
11. Which Pranayama is suitable for calming anger and reducing stress?

## 8.5 LET US SUM UP

- Pranayama, a key aspect of yoga, is derived from two Sanskrit words: Prana (life force) and Aayam (expansion/control).
- It involves regulating life force through breath control and is the fourth component of Ashtanga Yoga, as described by Maharishi Patanjali.
- The chapter focuses on five types of Pranayama: Suryabheda, Chandrabheda, Ujjayi, Sheetali, and Sheetkari.
- Pranayama enhances mental stability, peace, concentration, and overall physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual strength.
- It helps awaken the six chakras and prevent diseases.

- Controlling the prana helps control the mind, purify it, and lead to knowledge, aiding in meditation and sensory mastery.
- Suryabheda: Generates body heat, improves digestion, and cleanses sinuses. Avoid in summer or if suffering from hypertension or heart issues.
- Chandrabheda: Cools the body, reduces stress, and aids memory. Beneficial in summer but not for those with low blood pressure.
- Ujjayi: Calms the mind, reduces anxiety, and benefits nerve-related conditions. Avoid if introverted or with heart conditions.
- Sheetali: Lowers body heat, controls hunger, and reduces acidity. Avoid in cold climates or with low blood pressure or phlegm issues.
- Sheetkari: Produces cooling effects, reduces emotional excitement, and controls thirst. Avoid in cold weather or with sensitive teeth or Vaata nature.
- Pranayama practices should always be done with awareness of personal health conditions and the seasonal climate to ensure safety and effectiveness.

## 8.6 FURTHER READING


1. Swami Satyananda Saraswati: Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.
2. Swami Muktibodhananda: Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.
3. Dr H R Nagendra: Yoga for Diabeters, Swai Vivekananda Yoga Prakashan, Kepegowda Nagar, Banglore.
4. Swami Niranjananda Saraswati: Gherananda Samhita, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.
5. Swami Digambarji, Dr Pitambar Jha: HathaPradipika Swatmaram Krit, Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Pune.
6. Harikrishnadas Goyendka: Yoga Darshana, Gita Press, Gorakhpur.


## ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. Pranayama is made up of two words – Prana and Aayam. Prana means life force. Whereas Aayam means expansion, spread, regulation or control.

Q2. Maharishi Patanjali

Q3. “tasmin sati śvāsa-praśvāsayor gati-vicchedah prānāyāmah” (PYS 2.49)

Q4. To practice Surya Bheda Pranayama, sit comfortably in Dhyanasana with your eyes closed. Use your right hand to make Pranayama mudra, close your left nostril with the ring finger, and inhale deeply through the right nostril. Retain the breath as per your capacity, then close the right nostril with your thumb and exhale slowly through the left nostril. This completes one round.

Q5. The practice of Chandra bheda Pranayama reduces the bile in the body. Makes the body cool and reduces pitta dosh. It provides mental peace, reduces anger, reduces stress, and makes the mind happy. Helps in increasing memory. Regular practice is helpful in High blood pressure. Beneficial insummer season.

Q6. Introverted people should not practice this pranayama. People suffering from heart disease should not apply Bandha or breath retention with this pranayama.

Q7. Sheetali Pranayama involves rolling the tongue into a tube, inhaling through the rolled tongue, and exhaling through the nostrils.

Sheetkari Pranayama involves keeping the teeth lightly closed, inhaling through the gaps in the teeth to produce a hissing sound, and then exhaling through the nostrils.

Both practices cool the body but use different techniques for inhalation.

Q8. Chandra Bheda, Sheetali and Sheetkari Pranayama

Q9. Sheetali and Sheetkari Pranayama help reduce blood pressure.

Q10.The practice of Pranayama controls the mind by regulating the breath, which is the link between the body and the mind. Controlling the prana (life force) purifies the mind, bringing mental stability, calmness, and focus, ultimately enabling better control over thoughts and emotions.

Q11. Chandra Bheda Pranayama

## 8.6 MODEL QUESTIONS

**Objectives type question**

Q 1.What is the fourth component of Ashtanga Yoga as per Maharishi Patanjali?

Q 2.What is the sitting posture required for Surya Bheda Pranayama?

Q3. Which nostril is used for inhaling in Chandra Bheda Pranayama?

Q4. What does the term "Ujjayi" mean?

Q5. Which sound is produced during Ujjayi Pranayama?

Q6. Which Pranayama can be practiced while walking?

Q7. What does "Sheetali" mean in Sanskrit?

Q8. How is the tongue positioned in Sheetali Pranayama?

Q9. Why should Sheetali Pranayama not be practiced in cold climates?

Q10. What does "Sheetkari" translate to in English?

Q11. Which pranayama is better for someone with missing teeth—Sheetali or Sheetkari?

Q12. Which pranayama purifies the pingala nadi?

Q13. What does “Chandra” refer to in Chandra Bheda Pranayama?

Q14. Which pranayama produces a hissing sound during inhalation?

Q15. Which pranayama is beneficial for high blood pressure patients?

**Short questions**

Q 1.What is the primary purpose of practicing Pranayama?

Q2. What are the physical and spiritual benefits of regular Pranayama practice?

Q3. How does Pranayama help in achieving mental stability and concentration?

Q4. Why should Surya Bheda Pranayama be avoided in summer?

Q5. What are the main benefits of Surya Bheda Pranayama?

Q6. What is the main precaution for practicing Ujjayi Pranayama?

**Essay-type questions**

Q1. Discussed the techniques, benefits, and precautions of Surya bheda Pranayama.

Q2. Compare and contrast Suryabhedaand Chandrabheda Pranayama regarding technique, benefits, and precautions.

Q3. Discuss the role of Pranayama in preventing diseases and promoting overall physical and mental well-being.

Q4. How does Chandra Bheda Pranayama influence the body and mind? Discuss its benefits and limitations.

Q5. Discussed the techniques, benefits, and precautions of Ujjayi Pranayama.

Q6. Compare and contrast Sheetali and Sheetkari Pranayama regarding technique, benefits, and precautions.

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