

Ujjaji Pranayama (Svaroopa® Yoga Sounding Breathing)

Benefits:

- The sound of the breath soothes your mind and nervous system.
- This helps your breath to naturally slow down. The slow pace of the breath allows time for the body to absorb the oxygen into the cells, improving the efficiency of your cellular respiration further.
- This improves your metabolism, which affects the way your body handles nutrients from your food.
- This helps you to discover the organic and natural expansiveness of your breath, clearing out the stale air from your lungs, eliminating toxins from the whole body efficiently, and stimulating the immune system. (Yoga describes this as "purification"— a way of making your body less dense. Simultaneously your mind and emotions are cleared of the density. Most importantly, this purification or lightening up gives you access to the innermost dimensions of your own existence.)
- Overall, your breath becomes easier, smoother and more spacious! Your normal heart and breathing rates slow down.
- By doing 20 min per day, you also get the aerobic benefits of exercise, without having to tighten your spine, unlike other typical aerobic exercises which pump your breath and heart rate faster, and end up tightening up your spine muscles. Your heart-lung efficiency is improved by practicing Ujjayi Pranayama.
- Great for asthma, allergies, high blood pressure or coronary troubles, reducing stress, and improving your sleep.

Contraindication:

- DO NOT DO AFTER or DURING YOGA POSES.
- Do not "hold" the breath, especially after the inhalation if you have high blood pressure.
- Straining or forcing breath by anyone is dangerous.

How to do it:

1. Lie on your back on a flat surface or in bed, with your knees bent. You can use a pillow under knees to support legs or legs on chair. Your forehead and chin should be level. If not, support your head (not your neck!)
2. Rest your arms on the floor with your palms facing up and your arms angled out, about 6-10" away from your hips, OR rest your hands on your belly with your palms facing down.
3. Let your breath be easy and notice natural breathing pattern ("inhale-expansion, exhale-softening").
4. Notice how your breath is moving through your throat.
5. Gently, clear your throat or cough in order to fine the throat muscle, **not your neck muscles**.
6. Use the throat muscles to narrow your throat passageway slightly to produce the sound of your own breath, and listen to the sound as it moves in and out.
7. **SLOW DOWN** your breath so that sound becomes quieter.
8. **SMOOTH OUT** the flow of your breath so the sound becomes smooth and steady.
9. You may be able to **SOFTEN** your throat muscles a little more so that the sound becomes even easier.
10. **Simply listen to your own breath**, ease into practice, no big effort
11. Continue listening to the Ujjayi **sound, smooth and steady** for 20 min.
12. To come out, allow your throat muscles to soften and your breath to find its own easy pace.
13. Notice where and how your breath is moving now, how you are resting.
14. Take a long in-breath, & long slow out-breath, take another, and take one more after that.
15. Wiggle your toes and feet. Wiggle and stretch your fingers and hands. Roll your neck and head slowly from side-to-side. Stretch and move in any way you would like. Then, roll to your side and rest there with your hand or arm under your head as a pillow.

***If you need healing for any condition, do Ujjayi Pranayama for 20 min twice a day (20 min in the morning and 20 min in the evening)**

"The sound of the breath is the most important element of this breathing practice. Just listen!"

Provided by Ryoko Suzuki, MS, ATC, CSCS, LMT, CSYT (2009)

www.HealingSpiritBodywork.com ~ HearingSpiritBodywork@gmail.com

Reference: *The Benefits of Ujjayi Pranayama* by Swami Nirmalananda Saraswati (Originator of Svaroopa® Yoga), www.Svaroopa.org March, 2007