



Santhika  
Retreat  
Center

## 5 Exercises to Improve Digestion

Yogi Bhajan

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Use this Kundalini yoga sequence to maintain ideal digestion and overall health by increasing energy at the navel point and keeping the digestive organs strong and flexible.

The quality of our digestion is the key to health according to Ayurveda, as well as in yogic theory. If digestion is slow and unbalanced, the body becomes more vulnerable to disease (not to mention discomfort due to gas, bloating, constipation, and the like). Most colds and other illnesses can also be caused by an energy imbalance starting in the intestinal tract.

Kundalini Yoga supports perfect digestion by increasing the fire energy at the navel point and evenly distributing it throughout the body.



### Breath of fire

This Kundalini Yoga exercise plays a key role in many kriyas that aid digestion. A quick breathing exercise strengthens the diaphragm, balances all the digestive organs and facilitates easy cleansing.

Sitting cross-legged in a comfortable position, place both hands in Gyan Mudra (forefinger and thumb touching). Close your eyes. Focus your inner gaze on the point of the third eye. Begin to breathe quickly and rhythmically through your nose, doing a breath of fire, about 2-3 cycles per second. Continue for 1 to 3 minutes (may be extended up to 10 minutes for advanced practitioners). Finally, exhale powerfully through your nose, pressing your navel against your spine, then relax.



### Nose in knees.

This posture is well suited for working with the digestive organs and ensures the removal of excess gases. It is good to do it only when you wake up in the morning. It sets the navel point and stimulates apana which helps your digestive system to rest.

Lie on your back. Bend your legs and bring your knees to your chest. Grab your knees with your hands. Raise your head so that your nose is between your knees. Start breathing fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. At the end, inhale, hold your breath for a while and relax.



### Stretch Pose.

In many healing cultures, including Ayurveda, centering the pulse at the navel is very important as it affects all energy systems in the body. The correct location of the pulse tells how well you were fed as a child, and even your ability to breathe in the womb at the beginning of life. The stretch pose strengthens the navel and abdomen, purifies the blood and restores the entire nervous system.

Lying on your back, put your heels together, stretch your toes forward and lift your heels 10-15 cm off the ground. Raise your head to the same height, eyes focused on the fingers. The fingers reach for the toes. Start breathing fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. At the end, inhale, hold, exhale, relax.



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### Sitali pranayama.

This breathing calms and cools the spine in the region of the fourth, fifth and sixth vertebrae, which in turn regulates the sexual and digestive energies. If practiced regularly, this breathing leads to rejuvenation and detoxification. Your tongue may be bitter at the beginning of the exercise, but becomes sweeter as the exercise progresses.

Sit in easy pose with a straight back. Curl your tongue and stick it out of your mouth a little. Inhale deeply and evenly through your tongue and mouth. Exhale through the nose. Continue for 5 minutes. At the end of the inhale, hold your breath and your tongue. Exhale and relax. Repeat two more 5 minute periods of pranayama.



### Sat Kriya.

Sat kriya stimulates your navel point or third chakra and also aligns your first and second chakras. This law stabilizes the Lower Triangle. All three lower chakras should be in harmony so that one does not dominate the other. When the navel point is balanced and stimulated, there is a sense of self. It grounds you by improving digestion and excretion.

Sit on your heels, knees together. Stretch your arms above your head, elbows straight, palms together. Interlace all fingers except for the index finger. Men perform a cross with the thumb of the right hand over the left, and women vice versa. Stay firmly seated on your heels and keep your back straight throughout the kriya. Start singing "Sat Naam" with a steady rhythm, about eight times in 10 seconds. As you pull your navel in and up towards your spine, say "Sat". As you relax your belly, chant "Naam." Close your eyes and focus on the point between the eyebrows. Continue for 3 minutes with a measured rhythm. Let your breathing regulate itself.

Finally, inhale and lightly contract your muscles from your buttocks up along your spine. Slightly holding your breath, concentrate on the area just above the crown of your head. Exhale completely. Inhale again. Exhale completely, hold your breath and do moola bandha. Hold your breath for 5-20 seconds. Breathe in and relax.