

Yoga Breathing Anatomy

There is no reference to the author or source of this article. I assume the author is Alicia Rambo Wozniak.

Pranayama is breathing, but can also be translated as the energy of the universe. Breathing is both voluntary and involuntary.

Human Energy is comprised of 10 pranas, 5 major and 5 minor

Five Majors:

1. Udana – controls above the larynx and governs use of special senses
2. Prana – controls between larynx and base of the heart, governs the vocal and respiratory system
3. Samana – controls body between the heart and the navel, governs metabolism and digestion
4. Apana – controls the body below the navel and governs kidneys, colon, rectum, bladder and genitals
5. Vyana – controls whole body relaxation, muscle contraction and movement of joints

Five minors

1. Naga – burping
2. Kurma – blinking
3. Devadatta – yawning
4. Krikala – sneezing
5. Chananjuya – opening and closing heart valves

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The word pranayama is sometimes translated as the science of breathing, however, it is also translated as the energy of the universe. So in learning to control the breathing one may learn to control the energy of the universe as well as control the body and inner mind. According to the ancient manuals of yoga, the energy force of the human body is subdivided into ten pranas consisting of five of majors and five minors pranas. The five majors (Prana Vayus) are;

1. Udana which controls the part of body above the larynx and governs the use of our special senses.
2. Prana which controls the part of body between the larynx and the base of the heart and which governs the vocal and the respiratory system.
3. Samana which controls the part of body between the heart and the navel and which governs all metabolism and digestion.
4. Apana which controls the part of body below the navel and which governs the kidneys, colon, rectum, bladder and genitals.
5. Vyana which controls the whole part of body relaxation, the muscle contraction, and the movement of the joints.

Breathing is the external factor, it is controlled by prana. The yogi uses the athleticism of practicing the asanas and pranayama [i.e., breathing] as a tool to view the serenity of the inner mind.

The five minor (Upa) pranas

1. Naga : Responsible for burping.
2. Kurma : Responsible for blinking.
3. Devadatta : Responsible for yawning.
4. Krikala : Responsible for Sneezing.
5. Dhananjaya : Responsible for opening and closing of heart valves.

Breathing is both voluntary and involuntary. There are only two ways to gain to the consciousness of breathing. One is by systematically learning to practice breathing exercises and the other is being control of the automatic respiratory nervous systems which is done by willpower. The more that mind is made to focus one-pointed, the willpower is strengthened.

There are three major nadis [subtle channel of energy in our body, some ancient manuals reffer to 72,000 - 350,000 of nadis in a human body] which are;

1. Pingala which flows through the right nostril.
2. Ida which flows through the left nostril.
3. Sushumna flows vertically without any obstruction.

All three are based on the spine and travel up and down. Sushumna is located centrally, while Pingala and Ida criss-crossing up and down. The junctions where all three meet are calls Chakras.