

Yoni Breathing 101: Pelvic Floor Exercises for Sexual Health & Vitality

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How to combine breathwork with pelvic floor exercises for feminine sexual health and vitality!

Currently, 1 in 4 US women suffers from pelvic floor dysfunction including incontinence, prolapse, vaginismus, vulvodynia, and various forms of pelvic pain. Still, women are not largely provided with the tools and education needed to address these treatable conditions such as yoni breathing and pelvic floor exercises.

This fuels chronic sexual dissatisfaction, suppressed orgasmic potential, challenges in intimate partnerships, poor childbirth outcomes, poor body image, decreased sensitivity to pleasure, and a decline in women's overall quality of life.

Surgery is not the only option available for treatment and Kegels are not the answer to everything! In fact, they may even be a part of the problem. According to Physical Therapist, Lizanne Pastore, "The Kegel gospel of squeeze, squeeze, squeeze to strengthen the pelvic muscles has been presented to women for 60 years as the answer to everything. But it addresses only half of the equation. To strengthen the pelvic floor, you also need to relax the pelvic floor."

In a fast-paced world that keeps us on-the-go, over-cafeinated, and chronically tense—relaxation is an essential part of healthcare that must be incorporated in order for wellness to be accessible. In fact, chronic tension of the pelvic muscles is a huge contributing factor to pelvic floor dysfunction in many cases.

It isn't enough to simply squeeze the pelvic floor muscles every day, wellness can be achieved when we learn how to isolate, engage, coordinate, and relax the pelvic floor in sync with our natural breath cycle.

This article is an introduction to the ancient science of training the breath to support your sexual health as well as the body's nervous system for

stress-relief, restoration, and optimal functioning. This modality is known among yogic traditions as pranayama, one of the 8 limbs of yoga.

Pranayama is made up of two Sanskrit words, 'prana' meaning life force and 'ayama' meaning extension. It is the use of conscious breath control to direct and move energy (prana) throughout the body. You can use pranayama to sync with the movements of the pelvic floor with the breath, a sacred feminine practice known as Yoni breathing. Yoni breathing is a beautiful way to cultivate your daily practice of sensual self-care for greater overall vitality and increased sensitivity to pleasure!

What is Yoni Breathing?

Yoni breathing is a form of pranayama that supports the health of the vulva, vagina, erectile tissue, reproductive organs, and pubococcygeus (PC) muscles that make up the pelvic floor. By syncing voluntary PC muscle contractions (also known as Kegel exercises) with conscious breathing, freshly oxygenated blood can be more efficiently circulated throughout the pelvic region to strengthen, nourish, and energize the Yoni.

From a metaphysical perspective, Yoni breathing has long been used to birth ideas into physical manifestation by impregnating the womb with the power of intention through pranayama.

Benefits of Yoni Breathing

Yoni breathing can reduce stress, facilitate the release of traumatic energy that may be stored in the tissue of the womb, increase resilience, and support emotional wellbeing. Trauma is anything that overwhelms the nervous system (the body's ability to cope with stress in a healthy way).

By activating the parasympathetic nervous system, Yoni breathing counteracts the body's stress response to lower the concentration of stress hormones in circulation. With continued practice, Yoni breathing can help

to rewire the brain for emotional resilience so that when familiar ‘triggers’ are encountered, the body learns to respond in a calm and affirming manner.

According to Yoga Journal, research shows that breathwork results in greater happiness and emotional stability, better exercise stamina (in the bedroom) due to increased intake of oxygen, weight loss due to a decreased appetite, and a longer life expectancy due to overall health improvement.

Yoni breathing can also support flexibility and enhance the benefits of sacred movements such as Yoni yoga and dance. Energetically, it can also be used as one of many feminine practices to balance the chakra system for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

“Womb breathing requires patience and gentle presence from you, as it is done in a sacred manner with the clear intention to heal, soothe, and open the gateway to the womb.”

—Padma and Anaiya Aon Prakasha, Womb Wisdom

How To Practice Yoni Breathing

The Yoni breathing technique is a simple variation of belly breathing with a mental focus placed on the pelvic floor. It can be combined with several different pranayama styles to advance your practice or diversify the benefits of breathwork.

1. Begin by finding a comfortable position such as seated upright or lying on your back with your knees bent and the soles of your feet planted on the floor. Think of an intention that you wish to embody.
2. Next, inhale while squeezing your pelvic floor muscles (squeeze your anus inward and up without using your glutes or abs). This is also known as a Kegel exercise or *Mula bandha* in yogic traditions (a Sanskrit word meaning “root lock”). At the top of the breath, hold for 4 seconds. You can use this time to plant your intention into the womb.

3. Last, exhale slowly and release the contraction to completely relax the pelvic floor. Repeat this breath cycle 10-15 times.

This is a great technique to begin the day before getting out of bed and also at night before going to sleep to promote a well-toned pelvic floor. This is also the primary style of breathwork that complements the Yoni egg practice. It is imperative to allow the pelvic floor to completely relax by disengaging the muscles between each breath. You may need to slow down so that you can feel a complete relaxation.

The relaxation between breaths trains your Yoni muscles to properly engage and relax throughout the day in sync with your normal breathing pattern. It also prevents your pelvic floor muscles from becoming overly tense, which can decrease their blood and oxygen supply.

An overly tense pelvic floor can show up through lower back pain, vaginismus, vulvodynia, pelvic pain, painful periods, problems reaching orgasm, painful sex, vaginal dryness, and other yoni health issues.