

## Pranayama

# Great Waves: Empty Retention

**Starting Position:** lie down on the floor with your knees bent; your lumbar region is in complete contact with the ground. Before starting the exercise, breathe deeply for a minute in order to accumulate oxygen for a greater retention.

Exhale completely until it feels as though there is no more air in your lungs. While maintaining an empty retention, expand your chest as much as possible; then close your chest and expand your abdomen. Continue moving the diaphragm in this up-down way until you need to breathe again.

The movement of the air is felt posteriorly along the spine, like a trolley gliding forwards and backwards.

Before starting a new repetition, breathe deeply for a minute in order to accumulate oxygen. Repeat a maximum of 5 times.

It is very important that the downwards-upwards, upwards-downwards movement of the diaphragm is fluid and gentle.



**Contraindications:** heart disease; ulcerations of every nature in the abdominal area.

**Benefits:** this exercise is more effective when executed with empty lungs; increases elasticity of the diaphragm and helps develop awareness of the area and its functions.