

Pranayama

Great Waves: Partial Retention

Starting Position: lie down on the floor with your knees bent; the lumbar region is in complete contact with the ground. Before starting the exercise, breathe deeply 2-3 times.

Partially inhale, to about 50% of your vital capacity. While holding your breath, move the air from your abdomen (that draws in) to your chest (that expands). Then move the air from your chest to your abdomen (your chest will deflate and your abdomen will expand). Keep moving the breath in this way from the abdomen to the chest and from the chest to the abdomen, until it is necessary to breathe again.

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



Take a few natural breaths before repeating this exercise. Perform a maximum of 10 repetitions (eventually, slowly increase the number of repetitions). 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 increases elasticity of the diaphragm and helps to bring awareness to that area and its functions.