



Prenatal Yoga Tip #3 – Pranayama

Our breath is the bridge that connects our mind and our body. Considering that it is the single most important thing we do, it's surprising how often we move throughout our day not even being aware of it. The more we focus on our breath the more we strengthen our mind/body connection. A strong mind/body connection helps the expectant mother cope with pregnancy, tune into her own body during labour, and improve post-natal recovery.

There are many great breathing (pranayama) tools for pregnant women. Here are three you can practice at home, at work, on the bus, or in the car...

Even Ratio Breathing – Equal Turning Breath

Sitting (or even standing) with a straight spine begin by focusing on your breathing and then by counting to yourself, match the amount of time it takes to inhale with the amount of time it takes to exhale. Continue to count silently matching your inhale with your exhale. According to yogic philosophy, the inhale is the female breath, the exhale, male breath; therefore equal turning breath also helps balance one's hormones.

Deep Diaphragmatic Breath

In a seated position with a straight spine place your hands on your ribs to feel the expansion and contraction of your ribs. Try to lengthen your natural breath, comfortably as lengthening the breath calms the nervous system.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

Using your right hand, close your index, middle and third finger into your hand making a pretend telephone. Start by sealing the right nostril and breathing in through the left, then seal the left and breath out through the right, breath in through the right and then exhale through the left, always remaining for the inhale, switching sides for the exhale.

Resource material from: Prenatal Yoga Specialist, Susie Dias, East to West Yoga, 2007