

Cool the Fire Within

What follows is not a full pranayama session. It is a precise, targeted cooling sequence — three breathwork steps and one simple food swap — drawn from Ayurvedic wisdom and designed to work quickly, without ceremony or elaborate preparation. Each element has been chosen because it directly addresses the fire element at its source: the nervous system, the ida nadi, the belly, and the blood.

Read through once, then set the page aside and simply do it.

Notice what softens.

A gentle, evidence-rooted sequence for women who know their constitution — and feel the heat rising. Whether it is mid-afternoon restlessness, a tight jaw after a difficult meeting, or that familiar edge of irritability that creeps in when pitta runs high, this practice asks very little of you. Five minutes. A quiet corner. Your own breath.

Understanding Pitta Heat

In Ayurveda, **Pitta dosha** is the energy of transformation. It governs digestion, metabolism, focus, ambition, and our ability to process both food and life experiences.

Pitta isn't something to fear—it's essential for healthy functioning. The challenge comes when it accumulates and moves out of balance.

Summer is naturally a **Pitta season**, so this fiery energy tends to increase in both nature and within us. Pitta also peaks each day between **10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**, when our digestive fire and mental intensity are at their strongest.

If we're under prolonged stress, working without enough rest, or eating foods that further aggravate Pitta, this fire can build beyond what the body can comfortably manage. When that happens, it often shows up as heat in the body and intensity in the mind.

You may recognise pitta excess as a flushed face, a tendency to snap at small inconveniences, acid reflux after meals, or a relentless drive that refuses to let you rest. The jaw is often the first place the body stores this unprocessed heat — clenched without your awareness, braced against the demands of the day.

Signs of Pitta Rising

- Irritability or impatience without clear cause
- Flushing, warmth in the chest or face
- Sharp hunger followed by acid or nausea
- Clenched jaw, tight shoulders
- Difficulty winding down in the afternoon

What Cooling Practices Do

Cooling breathwork activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reduces cortisol, and stimulates the ida nadi — the left energy channel associated with lunar, cooling qualities. Even a few rounds create a measurable shift in the body's internal temperature and stress response.

Step One: Sheetali – The Cooling Breath

6 ROUNDS · 3-4 MINUTES

Sheetali is perhaps the most direct cooling tool available in the pranayama tradition. Its name translates simply as "that which cools," and it does precisely that quietening the nervous system within just a few rounds.

Sit comfortably – on a chair is perfectly fine. Let your spine lengthen without rigidity. Gently part the lips, roll the sides of the tongue upward to form a soft tube or trough, and let the tip extend just slightly beyond the lips. Inhale slowly through this channel, feeling the cool air travel down your throat. Close the mouth and exhale fully, quietly, through the nose. That is one round.

1

Prepare

Sit tall, jaw unclenched. Part your lips gently and curl the tongue into a tube.

2

Inhale

Draw breath slowly through the curled tongue. Feel the coolness as air passes over it.

3

Close & Exhale

Draw the tongue in, close the mouth softly, and exhale fully through both nostrils.

4

Repeat

Complete 6 rounds without hurry. Let each exhale be longer than the inhale.

If your tongue does not curl – simply rest the tongue flat behind the lower teeth, part the lips slightly, and inhale through the small gap between them. This variation is called Sitkari, and it is equally effective. The cooling principle is the same.

Step Two: Left-Nostril Breathing

— Activating Ida

10 ROUNDS · 3-5 MINUTES

In the Ayurvedic and yogic anatomy of the subtle body, the ida nadi flows along the left side — from the base of the spine, spiralling upward to terminate at the left nostril. Ida is the lunar channel: cooling, receptive, and calming in its qualities. When you breathe exclusively through the left nostril, you are deliberately feeding this channel, encouraging the body to shift from a solar, heating state into a softer, more settled one.


Research into nasal breathing has shown that the two nostrils have distinct neurological influences — right nostril breathing activates the sympathetic nervous system, whilst left nostril breathing activates the parasympathetic. For women managing pitta accumulation, this simple act of closing one nostril is a powerful and immediate intervention.

How to Practise

Bring the right hand to the face. Use the right thumb to gently close the right nostril — press just firmly enough to seal it. Let the other fingers rest comfortably. Breathe in and out only through the left nostril for ten full rounds. Keep the breath unhurried. If the mind wanders, return it gently to the sensation of coolness at the left nostril tip. After ten rounds, release the hand and sit quietly for a breath or two.

What You May Notice

- A tangible sense of settling in the chest
- Reduced urgency or mental chatter
- Slower, more even breath naturally
- A slight drop in physical warmth
- Softening around the eyes and brow

 The left channel is *ida* — the cooling, calming current. Ten rounds is all it takes to begin shifting the body's internal climate.

Step Three: Palms to Belly, Jaw Soft

5 SLOW BREATHS · 2 MINUTES

This third step is the quietest, and in many ways the most important. The first two practices direct and cool the breath. This one asks you to arrive more fully in the body — to place your hands where much of pitta's fire is stored, and to release the single most common site of unconscious tension: the jaw.

Heat lives in a clenched jaw. This is not metaphor — the masseter muscles are among the strongest in the body relative to their size, and chronic tension here signals the entire nervous system to remain on alert. When you consciously release the jaw — letting it drop just slightly, letting the back teeth part, letting the tongue rest loosely on the floor of the mouth — you are sending a direct signal downward through the vagus nerve: it is safe to soften now.

Place Both Palms Flat on the Belly

Just below the navel, one hand over the other. Feel the warmth of your own hands. Feel the rise and fall of the abdomen. This contact alone begins to regulate the nervous system.

Let the Jaw Drop Gently

Not dramatically — just enough to create a small space between the back teeth. Unclench. Let the tongue rest without effort. Notice what releases in the neck and shoulders when the jaw softens.

Breathe Slowly for Five Rounds

No counting, no specific ratio. Simply breathe slowly enough that the belly rises into your palms on the inhale, and falls gently on the exhale. Five breaths is enough. This is the letting go.

The Sequence at a Glance

Together, these three steps form a coherent arc: cooling the physical breath, calming the nervous system through the lunar channel, and releasing stored tension from the body's most instinctive holding place. They take fewer than ten minutes. They can be done at a desk, in a parked car, on the edge of a bed.



The sequence works best practised in order — each step prepares the ground for the one that follows. Sheetali cools the physical body and primes the nervous system. Left-nostril breathing deepens that shift, engaging the parasympathetic branch more fully. The final step of hand-on-belly, jaw-released breathing consolidates the change and allows it to settle into the tissues. Do not rush the transitions between steps. Sit for one ordinary breath between each before moving on.

The Food Swap: Trade Coffee for Coolness

ONE SIMPLE CHANGE

Breathwork works from the inside out. But what you drink in the afternoon either supports that shift or quietly undoes it. Caffeine — and this includes the beloved afternoon cup of coffee — is, in Ayurvedic terms, a direct fire-feeder for pitta types. It is rajasic (stimulating), heating in its energetic quality, and acidic in its effect on the digestive system. For a pitta constitution already running warm, it is, quite simply, fire on fire.

The swap is not about deprivation. It is about choosing something that gives you an equivalent sense of ritual and satisfaction, without adding heat to an already warm system.

Coconut Water

Naturally sweet, mineral-rich, and deeply cooling in Ayurvedic energetics. It pacifies pitta directly, rehydrates the blood, and provides a gentle lift without the cortisol spike of caffeine. Choose fresh or minimally processed versions where possible.

Fennel Tea

Fennel is one of Ayurveda's most trusted pitta-cooling herbs. Mildly sweet, gently digestive, and calming to the liver. Brew one teaspoon of seeds in hot water, allow to cool slightly, and drink it warm or at room temperature. The ritual of making it is itself a small pause.

Rose Water or Rose Tea

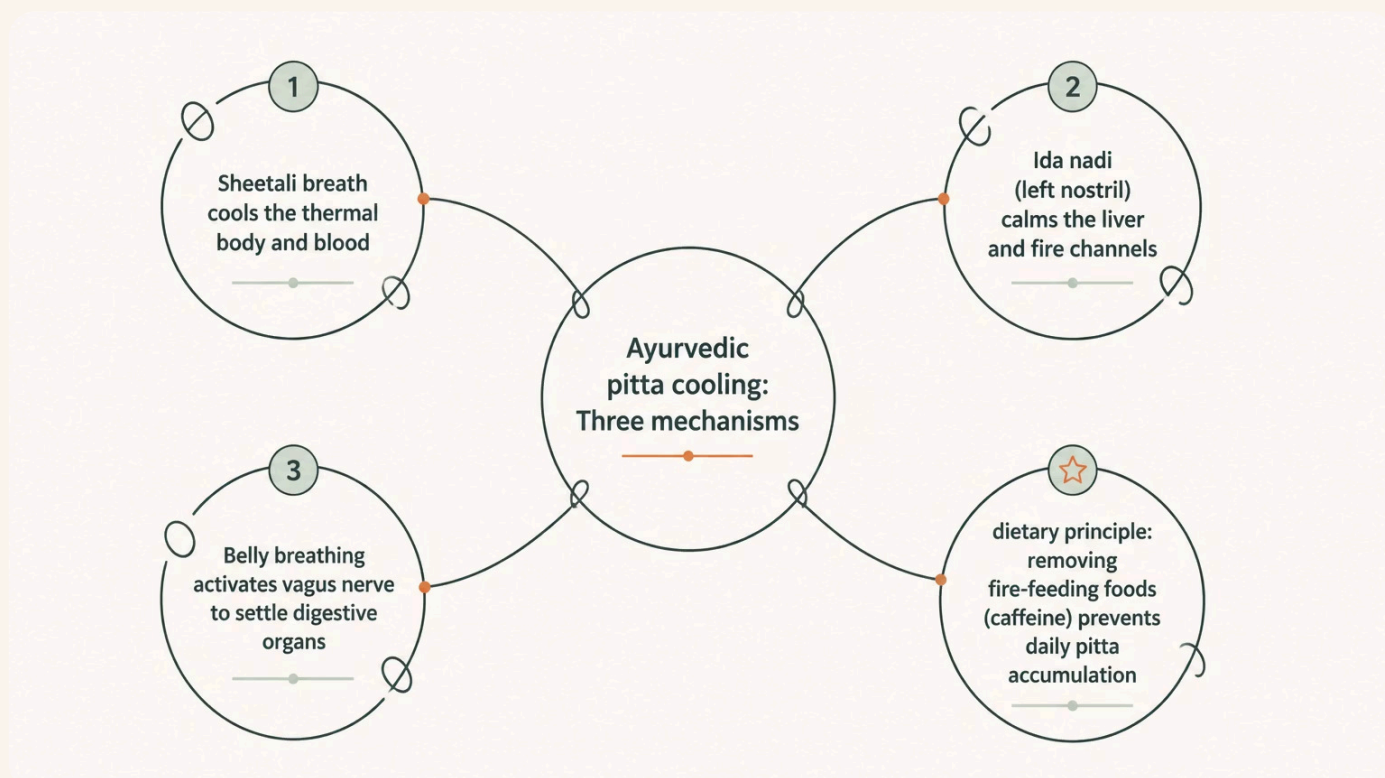
Rose is cooling, astringent, and deeply soothing to the emotional body — particularly relevant for pitta's tendency toward intense feeling. A small glass of diluted rose water, or a cup of dried rose petal tea, offers softness that coffee never can.

This one dietary change — just this one — does more sustained work than any supplement aimed at cooling the system. It removes a daily source of aggravation before it accumulates. Begin with one afternoon this week.

Why These Practices Work: The Ayurvedic View

From the perspective of Ayurvedic physiology, pitta dosha is composed primarily of fire and water. It governs all transformative processes: how we digest food, how we metabolise experience, how we convert ambition into action. Its seat in the body is the small intestine, the liver, and the eyes – but it circulates throughout, and when it is in excess, it rises upward through the system, expressing as heat, inflammation, sharpness of tongue and thought.

Cooling practices work by counterbalancing these qualities directly. Cold air drawn over a moistened tongue introduces a tangible thermal shift. Left-nostril breathing calms the liver's fire through the ida channel. Belly breathing activates the vagus nerve, which reaches directly into the digestive organs where pitta is stored. Each element of this sequence has a precise target.



What makes this sequence reliable for women with established Ayurvedic knowledge is its precision. These are not general relaxation techniques dressed in traditional language. Each practice maps directly onto a known mechanism within the system – which is why even a few rounds produce a noticeable, immediate result. The body recognises these signals. It has been waiting for them.

Building the Habit: When and How Often

A single practice of this sequence is worthwhile. But its deeper value lies in repetition — in training the nervous system to respond to pitta accumulation before it tips into genuine imbalance. The question of when to practise matters more than it might seem.



Morning (before the day accelerates)

If afternoons are too unpredictable, morning practice sets a cooler baseline for the entire day. Practised before caffeine and before the mental agenda begins, the sequence establishes a calmer internal climate that pitta-provoking situations are less able to destabilise.



Mid-Afternoon (2–4 pm)

This is the natural peak of pitta time. Heat has been accumulating since mid-morning. The sequence practised at this hour interrupts the cycle before it builds into evening irritability or restless sleep. Even three minutes at the desk will shift the afternoon's quality considerably.



Evening Wind-Down

For women whose pitta heat disrupts sleep — lying awake with a busy mind, warmth in the chest, or difficulty releasing the events of the day — the sequence practised in bed is particularly valuable. The jaw-release and belly-breath step can be done lying down without any modification.

Once a day is sufficient for a maintenance practice. During periods of heightened pressure, travel, or seasonal pitta aggravation (late spring through summer), twice daily is a genuine support — morning and afternoon, each session no longer than ten minutes.

Do It Once Today

There is a particular kind of Ayurvedic wisdom that does not ask very much of you at once. It understands that lasting change lives in small, consistent acts — not in grand overhauls of routine. This sequence is built on that principle. It asks for ten minutes. One afternoon coffee replaced with coconut water or fennel tea. Six rounds of Sheetali. Ten breaths through the left nostril. Five slow exhalations with your palms warm on your belly and your jaw, finally, soft.

Do it once today. Notice what softens. That noticing — quiet and unhurried — is the beginning of everything.

You already know your constitution. You already understand the principle of like increases like, and its cooling counterpart. What this practice offers is the practical, immediate expression of that understanding — not theory held in the mind, but knowledge felt in the body. The heat was never your enemy. It is your energy, asking to be tended with a little more care.

Sheetali 6 rounds. Curl the tongue, inhale cool, exhale through the nose.	Left Nostril 10 rounds. Right thumb seals the right nostril. Breathe only through ida.
Palms & Jaw 5 breaths. Hands on belly, jaw released, tongue resting soft.	The Swap Coconut water or fennel tea in place of afternoon coffee. Once is enough to begin.

Come back to this whenever the fire rises. It will be here, quiet and reliable, exactly as you left it.

Ready to Go Deeper?

The Sacred Vitality Collective is a membership for women who are ready to stop surviving and start living in rhythm with their bodies. It's where ancient Ayurvedic wisdom meets modern life, helping you restore your digestion, balance your hormones, calm your nervous system, and rebuild your ojas—your deepest reserve of vitality.

Inside, you'll find everything you need to keep cooling the fire — together try it now for \$67. Only until 31 JULY.



Monthly LIVE Coaching

Guidance and support to integrate practices into your daily life.



Practical Kitchen Sadhana & Meal Prep

Simple, Ayurvedic-aligned meal planning and preparation for balance.



Seasonal Recipes

Delicious, cooling recipes tailored to the seasons to prevent pitta accumulation.



Gentle Yoga and Breathwork

Practices designed to calm the nervous system and release heat.



Mindset Coaching

Tools and perspectives to cultivate a cool, clear mind amidst life's intensity.



Vedic Astrology

Insights into your unique energetic blueprint and how to work with planetary influences.



Moon Circles

Connecting with lunar rhythms and sisterhood for collective healing and growth.



A Supportive Sisterhood

A community that reminds you you're not meant to do this alone.

You don't have to do this alone. Come join us.