



# Nadi Sodhana Pranayama

By Master Teacher James E  
Bryan

Student:

*'Today I have a question about breathing in nadi sodhana: why do we always start inhaling on the right and not on the left? In many traditions, it is written that one should start with the left. Can you help me there?'*

James Bryan:

*'We asked Pattabhi Jois about the Right side first and he said because it is auspicious, which is not very helpful. If you look in Light on Pranayama, BKS Iyengar always starts inhaling on the Right.'*

*We know that the Right side is heating and the Left side is cooling. The Right nostril affects the Left hemisphere of the brain and the Left nostril the Right hemisphere.*

*The Left Brain is the analytical side and the Right Brain the creative side. The Left Brain controls the right side of the body, and the Right Brain the left.*

*You could make a good argument to alternative like we do with the Asanas, if you did not practice both Surya Bhedana and Chandra Bhedana beforehand.*

*With Surya and Chandra Bhedana we have already activated both sides of the breath in preparation for the practice of Nadi Sodhana, therefore no need to alternate the starting breath. But, if you are only practicing Nadi Sodhana and not Surya and Chandra then you could alternate the starting breath.*

*From what I have seen the Sivananda Yoga lineage start with the Left and the Krishnamacharya lineage starts with the Right.*

*One last reason to keep the starting nostril as the Right is the KISS principle - keep it simple and straightforward, because there are more variations of Nadi Sodhana Pranayama than we teach in Knoff Yoga. See Light on Pranayama.*

*Hope this is helpful'*