

## Physical Preparation

Physical fitness and overall good health are important elements for an excursion like this. If you haven't already, we suggest that you begin a regular practice for conditioning your body.

Aerobic exercise is especially helpful to prepare for trekking and high altitudes. One method is fast-walking, building up to a steady pace on inclines, hilly terrain, or stairs, and increasing distance. We highly recommend walking regularly with your day pack (filled) and trekking poles and pushing yourself on some longer hikes whenever possible. Also, the yogic breathing techniques (pranayama) of kapalabhati, bhastrika, and nadi shodhanam (alternate nostril breathing) are also good preparation, as is the practice of agni sara to energize the solar plexus and help sustain vitality. These practices are best done regularly, starting with a few repetitions and progressing gradually according to your capacity. If you don't know these techniques, we recommend that you take a pranayama or hatha yoga class with a qualified instructor. The Himalayan Institute's Wisdom Library and Yoga International both provide instructional articles and videos on some of these techniques, including contraindications, as do the books *Path of Fire and Light, Vol. 1*, by Swami Rama, and *Science of Breath*, by Swami Rama, Rudolph Ballentine, MD, and Alan Hymes, MD. These can be ordered through Himalayan Institute Press at 800-822-4547, press 4, or [online](#).