

SALINE RINSES

You may worry that rinsing your nose with salt water (saline) will be uncomfortable, but most people get used to it very quickly and eventually like the feeling of cleaning out their nose and sinuses.

WHY DO IT?

Normally, the nasal and sinus cavities are able to make, circulate, and clear out mucus on their own. However, swelling of the nasal and sinus lining from things like allergies, irritation, inflammation, or infection can prevent this self-cleaning from occurring. Saline rinses/irrigation help wash away trapped mucus and irritating particles, stimulate cilia movement and healthy secretions, reduce postnasal drip, and keep the mucosal lining moist until it becomes healthy and can function normally again.

HOW DO I MAKE THE SOLUTION?

We recommend using a NeilMed Sinus Rinse bottle or Neti Pot for rinsing (see pictures below). You can also buy commercially prepared packets containing a salt and baking powder mix. These products can be found at any pharmacy. However, the specific device does not matter as long as it is delivering a high volume of salt water into your nose.

Fill the bottle or pot with 8 oz (240 milliliters) of distilled or boiled (then cooled) water. Use water that is tepid or at room temperature. Add the salt packet. If your provider recommended adding something else to your rinses, such as a steroid solution, add that as well. You can also make your own rinse by adding ½ teaspoon (2.5g) of non-iodized salt (plus ½ teaspoon [2.5g] of baking soda as a buffer if you would like) to your sterile water.

HOW DO I IRRIGATE?

If using the rinse bottle, place the tip of the bottle into your nostril (more towards the ear than the middle of the nose, and towards the back of the head and not the top of the head) and squeeze the bottle gently. One squeeze will empty about half the bottle. Use the other half in the opposite nostril. It is best to lean forward over a sink at a 45-degree angle while you are rinsing so that the solution can drip out of your nose. The goal is for the solution to get to the back of your nose and come out your other nostril. It is OK if you swallow some of the saline solution or if it comes out of your mouth.

CLEANING THE EQUIPMENT

You should clean your rinsing device with soap and water daily. Rinse thoroughly and allow the device to completely air dry before using it again. Once a week you can use a diluted solution of betadine or bleach (1 part bleach and 100 parts water) to more

thoroughly clean your rinsing device. We recommend you replace the entire bottle or pot every 3 months.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Breathe through your mouth or hold your breath while rinsing
- Stop rinsing if you need to sneeze or cough
- Do not speak or swallow to avoid changes in ear and nose pressure while rinsing
- Do not lean your head back while rinsing

