

Nasal Saline Irrigation

Mix together the following ingredients and obtain the following equipment:

- 1 liter (quart) of warm water (distilled is preferred).
- 2-3 heaping teaspoons of salt (not table salt as it contains a large number of additives including iodine, preservatives and sugar. Use canning, pickling or "sea salt" as these have fewer additives.)
- 1 teaspoon Arm & Hammer® Baking Soda (pure bicarbonate)
- 1 plant mister, bulb syringe, large medical syringe, or Waterpik® with irrigator tip

Irrigate both nostrils five to six cycles a day, five or six sprays each cycle. Stand over a sink and squirt the saltwater into the nose in such a fashion that you are able to spit some of the saline out of your mouth. This suggests that you are doing an adequate job of irrigating the entire nose. Aim the stream of saline as though you are trying to squirt the back of your head, NOT the top of your head. It is acceptable to breathe saltwater directly into the nose.

Warm saltwater is preferred as it is much more comfortable. The amount of salt added will depend on your tolerance. However, the more salt that is added the greater the decongestant effect. The bicarbonate is a buffer and will allow the saltwater to be less irritating.

The benefits of hypertonic saline irrigation are threefold:

1. It is a solvent. It cleans mucus, crusts and other debris from the nasal passages.
2. It decongests the nose. Because of high salt concentration, fluid is pulled out of the membrane. This fluid shift shrinks the membrane, thus improving nasal airflow and operating sinus passages.
3. It improves nasal drainage. Studies have shown that saltwater cleansing of the nasal membranes improves ciliary beating so that normal mucus is transported better from the sinuses through the nose and into the throat.

If you are also using a nasal medication such as Flonase®, Nasocort® or Ponaris®, you should always cleanse the nose first with saltwater before using the nasal steroid. The nasal steroid is most effective when sprayed onto clean nasal membranes. The nasal steroid reaches deeper into the nose after the nose has been cleansed and decongested with saltwater.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call on us at (585) 256-3550 and ask for our nurse. We are all here to assist you in any way we can.

Instructions for using nasal sprays

Important note – do not spray into eyes

Before using any prescription nasal spray the bottle must be primed. To do this.

- A. Take the cap off the bottle.
- B. Shake bottle gently before each use.
- C. Place thumb under bottle, place index and middle finger on either side of the spray tip.
- D. Quickly and firmly press down on the white collar while supporting the base of the bottle with your thumb. See Figure A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAILY USE

1. Gently blow your nose to clear your nostrils if necessary
2. Shake the bottle gently for a few seconds and remove protective cap
3. Hold bottle firmly with index and middle finger on either side of the spray tip and your thumb underneath the bottle
4. Insert the spray tip into your nostril (the tip should not reach far into your nose.) Close the other nostril with a finger and lean your head slightly forward so the spray will aim toward the back of your nose
5. Angle the tip of the bottle away from your nasal septum (the divider of the inside of your nose). See Figure B
6. For each spray, actuate the pump by quickly and firmly pressing down on the white collar while supporting the base of the bottle with your thumb. Breathe gently inward through the nostril.
7. After spraying into your nostril, lean your head backward for a few seconds. See Figure C.
8. Repeat steps 3-7 for your other nostril
9. Avoid blowing your nose for 15 minutes after using a prescription nasal spray
10. Wipe the spray tip with a clean tissue and replace the protective cap. Store the bottle in the upright position.

If the spray tip becomes blocked:

- A. Remove protective cap and lift off the spray tip
- B. Wash only the protective cap and spray tip in warm water and rinse them in cold water.
- C. Allow the plastic parts to air-dry completely before reassembling the nasal spray.