

Nasal Saline Rinse

What is a nasal saline rinse?

A nasal saline rinse is a treatment that you can do at home to relieve symptoms of nasal congestion. The sinuses behind the nose are hollow spaces that help warm and add moisture to the air you breathe. Infections and allergies can cause the lining of the sinuses to swell.

Swelling and mucus may block the sinuses and be painful. Mucus draining down the throat can trigger wheezing in people with asthma.

The nasal rinse saline solution is salt water. Nasal saline rinses help keep the nose, sinus passages, and throat clear of mucus. Nasal saline spray is not the same as a nasal saline rinse. The spray will add moisture to the air you breathe, but will not clear the sinuses.

You can purchase a nasal saline rinse kit at the store, or you can make your own.

Recipe for Saline Solution

It is very important to use **fresh** saline solution because bacteria can grow in saline and bacteria can cause infections. If you are buying a saline solution, buy individual-use packs only.

To make your own saline solution:

Mix 8 ounces of water (1 measuring cup) with 1/2 teaspoon of non-iodized table salt and a pinch of baking soda. It's best to use lukewarm distilled, filtered or previously boiled water. Having the right mix helps prevent irritation.

Make a fresh supply of saline solution every time you do a nasal rinse.

To do a nasal rinse:

- Fill a bulb syringe or nasal saline rinse bottle with solution.
- Lean over a sink with your head tilted slightly forward and your chin tilted slightly toward your chest.
- Insert the syringe tip just inside one nostril and gently squeeze the bulb, releasing the solution into the nose until the saline solution comes out of the other nostril. Lean forward to reduce the amount of solution draining down the back of your throat.
- Blow your nose gently and repeat the process with the other nostril.

NOTE: Use nasal irrigations before using nasal spray medicines. It is best to wait 15 to 20 minutes after the nasal irrigation before using the nasal spray medicine, if possible.

Developed by RelayHealth.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.