

## **Nasal Rinse**

Nasal rinses are used to rinse mucous and irritants from the nasal passages and to add moisture and soothe irritated nasal passages. It can be helpful to people who have lots of mucous from colds, chronic sinus infections or allergies.

### **What equipment do I need?**

There are many different bottles or bowl shaped “pots” sold at the pharmacy or grocery store for nasal rinses. Choose the type that is most comfortable for you to hold or use.



Equipment:

1. nasal rinse bottle or “pot”
2. distilled water
3. salt/baking soda mixture or sinus rinse packets sold at the pharmacy or grocery store
4. sink or shower

### **Why do I need distilled water?**

Distilled water is made from steam collected from boiling water which removes most impurities and bacteria. You can buy it at the grocery store. Do not use tap water because it may contain bacteria or mold which can lead to sinus infections.

### **How do I make my own salt mixture?**

If you do not want to buy pre-made sinus rinse packets you can make our own salt mixture. Mix: 3 teaspoons of pickling/canning salt and 1 teaspoon of baking soda in a small airtight container and save until you need it.

### **How do I perform a nasal rinse?**

1. Wash your hands
2. Put 1 teaspoon of salt mix or 1 salt packet in 1 cup of distilled water and stir until dissolved.
3. Warm the liquid in the microwave for 20-40 seconds until it is warm (not hot). Test with your finger or wrist.
4. Lean over the sink or stand in the shower with your head turned.
5. Breathe through your mouth but don't hold your breath.
6. Put the tip of the bottle or “pot” spout into the “top” nostril and let ½ of the liquid flow in. The liquid will drain out the other nostril.
7. Turn your head and rinse the other nostril.
8. Turn your head slowly from side to side until all the fluid has drained. If you need to blow your nose – do it gently.
9. Clean the bottle or “pot” and wash your hands.



### **How often should I do a nasal rinse?**

Nasal rinses can be done occasionally, a few times a week or every day depending on your symptoms. If you are unsure, ask your doctor how often you should do the rinse.

### **What is the best way to clean the equipment?**

- Clean the bottle, nasal tip or “pot” in the sink with dish soap and water.
- Rinse well and shake off the extra water.
- Put everything in the microwave and microwave on high for 1-2 minutes to kill the bacteria.
- Wrap in a paper towel and store in a dry place.
- Buy a new bottle or “pot” every 3 months.



### **When should I avoid nasal rinses?**

- Don't do a rinse within 1 hour of going to bed.
- Don't use if you have had ear surgery, ear infection or blocked ears.
- Don't use if it causes pain in the nose or ears. Remember, you may feel mild stinging or burning in the nose if the liquid is too hot or cold or if the concentration of salt is too high. You may cut back on the amount of salt in the mixture if it is burning.