

# MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



## Nasal Wash Treatment Using Sinus Rinse™

### Why should you do a nasal wash?

Many people with asthma or other lung problems also have nasal and sinus symptoms. Drainage from your nose and sinuses can make asthma worse, especially at night. A salt water nasal wash, or nasal irrigation, can help reduce this. A nasal wash:

- Cleans mucus from the nose so medication can be more effective,
- Cleans allergens and irritants from the nose reducing their impact,
- Cleans bacteria and viruses from the nose decreasing infections and
- Decreases swelling in the nose and increases airflow.

The Sinus Rinse Kit is one technique to do a nasal wash. The Sinus Rinse Kit comes with an 8 ounce or 4 ounce Sinus Rinse bottle and mixture packets. When using the Sinus Rinse Kit you can use the prepared mixture packets that come with the kit or you can make your own nasal wash solution. Both procedures will be described.



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### Preparing to Do A Nasal Wash - Using the Prepared Packets

1. Wash your hands.
2. Do **not** use tap water for the nasal wash (unless boiled or filtered as described below). Do **not** use well water.

#### You may use:

- Distilled water,
- Sterilized water,
- Tap water that has been boiled for 1 minute (at elevations above 6,500 ft., boil for 3 minutes) and cooled or
- Tap water that is filtered using a filter with an absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller.

3. Fill up the clean bottle to the dashed line on the bottle with lukewarm or room temperature water (listed above).
4. Cut the Sinus Rinse mixture packet along the dotted line. Pour the contents into the bottle of warm water.
5. Secure the cap with the tube onto the bottle.
6. Shake the bottle to dissolve the mixture.

### Preparing to Do A Nasal Wash - Making the Nasal Wash Solution

1. Wash your hands.
2. Do **not** use tap water for the nasal wash (unless boiled or filtered as described below). Do **not** use well water.  
You may use:
  - Distilled water,
  - Sterilized water,
  - Tap water that has been boiled for 1 minute (at elevations above 6,500 ft., boil for 3 minutes).\ and cooled or
  - Tap water that is filtered using a filter with an absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller.
3. Fill up the clean bottle to the dashed line on the bottle with lukewarm or room temperature water (listed above).
4. **If you have an 8 ounce bottle** - To make the saltwater solution, pour one-half teaspoon uniodized salt into the bottle of water. Uniodized salt is used because iodized salt may be irritating when used over a long period of time. Add a pinch of baking soda. A pinch is a small amount you can pick up between two fingers.  
**If you have a 4 ounce bottle** - To make the saltwater solution, pour one-fourth teaspoon uniodized salt into the bottle of water. Uniodized salt is used because iodized salt may be irritating when used over a long period of time. Add a pinch of baking soda. A pinch is a small amount you can pick up between two fingers
5. Secure the cap with the tube onto the bottle.
6. Shake the bottle to dissolve the mixture.

### What is the Correct Nasal Wash Technique Using the Sinus Rinse?

#### Position for the nasal wash.

- Adults and older children – Stand in front of the sink and lean far over the sink with your head down.
- Younger children - If possible, have your child lean as far over the sink as possible. A small child may have trouble cooperating with a nasal wash and may need to be held and assisted. You will be shown ways to hold a small child when doing a nasal wash.

#### Performing the nasal wash.

1. Apply the cap snugly against the nasal passage and squeeze the bottle gently until the solution drains from the opposite nasal passage or from the mouth. Try not to swallow the solution.
2. Repeat the procedure on the other side.



3. Squeeze gently two to three times in each nasal passage. This will take between 2-4 oz for each nasal passage.
4. Gently blow the nose. Do not block the nasal passage completely while blowing to avoid pressure on the ear drum.
5. If you have a salty taste in your mouth you may want to rinse your mouth with water after the nasal wash.
6. Once you have finished, discard any unused solution.
7. Try to do the nasal wash at least 1 hour before bed.

### How do you clean the equipment?

You must thoroughly clean the equipment used for a nasal wash to prevent the growth of bacteria. It is important for each family member to have his/her own Sinus Rinse bottle. Do not share the Sinus Rinse bottle.

#### Cleaning the Sinus Rinse bottle

- After each use put a small amount of dishwashing detergent in the bottle. Add water (described above). Secure the cap with the tube onto the bottle. Shake the bottle. Rinse the bottle, tubing and cap with water. Shake off any excess water and allow the pieces to dry on a clean towel.
- If you feel the system is discolored or contaminated clean the bottle, cap and tubing with rubbing (70 percent isopropyl) alcohol or white, distilled vinegar (1 part vinegar to 3 parts water). After the use of either solution, rinse the pieces well with water and shake off the excess water. Again, allow the pieces to dry on a clean towel. You may also place the bottle tubing and cap in the microwave for 1.5 – 2 minutes.
- The Sinus Rinse bottle is not cleaned well using the dishwasher.
- Replace the Sinus Rinse bottle every 3 months or if it becomes discolored.

If you have any questions about this nasal wash technique, please ask your health care provider.

Note: This information is provided to you as an educational service of LUNG LINE® (1-800-222-LUNG). It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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