



Saline Rinses for the Nose

Saline rinses

The nose filters, moisturises and warms the air that you breathe in to your lungs. Sometimes your nose also needs to be cleansed and moisturised otherwise it becomes blocked or very runny. Saline (salty water) rinses are a gentle way to clean and moisturise the nose. It helps to wash away excess mucus and irritants inside your nose which can help reduce swelling and a blocked nose (rhinitis).

Saline rinses should be performed before using any nasal sprays, drops, ointments or creams. It is really helpful to do saline rinses even if you do not use any nasal medication.

Here is a homemade option that you can make yourself. There are also options that you can buy from a chemist/pharmacy or large supermarket. Both are equally safe to use. Try and cleanse your nose with a saline rinse at least three times a day. After brushing your teeth in the morning and evening, and when you return home for the day are ideal times.

Recipe

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 pint of clean water (water from your cold tap that has been boiled then cooled to room temperature – do not attempt to rinse your nose while the water is still hot!)

If you want to make a solution for the whole day use 1 tablespoon of salt, 1 tablespoon of bicarbonate of soda and 1.5 litres of water. Keep it in a clean jug that is covered and use a third of the solution each time. Make a fresh bottle every day.

How to rinse your nose

- Lean forward over the sink
- Breathe through your mouth
- Cup the palm of one hand and pour a small amount of the solution into it, sniff the water
- into one nostril at a time
- If you are using a sinus rinse bottle, gently squirt the solution up each nostril
- You can do this up to 3 times a day
- Use any nasal sprays or drops after you have cleansed your nose



Top tips

- The first few times you rinse your nose it may feel like you have sniffed in sea water or swimming pool water because it stings. This is normal and will get better each time.
- Don't forget to breathe through your mouth!
- If you are using a sinus rinse bottle, make sure it is cleaned after each use.

Disclaimer: This publication is designed for the information of patients. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the information contained may not be comprehensive and patients should not act upon it without seeking professional advice.

Trusted
Information
Creator



Patient Information Forum

ENT UK has recently gained PIF TICK accreditation to become a 'trusted information creator'.

Kindly submit your feedback to help us improve our Patient Information Leaflets.

We greatly value your input and appreciate the time you take to provide it.

[FEEDBACK SURVEY](#)



Date Published: 22/10/2024 **Review Date:** 22/10/2027