

Hypertonic Saline Nasal Wash

For Nasal Congestion and Sinusitis (adults)

Hypertonic saline is a natural decongestant, which helps clear the nasal passages of dried or thick secretions. They improve nasal airflow. These treatments promote normal sinus drainage and will help your recovery from upper respiratory infections. In some cultures this is a daily routine as common as our tooth brushing. Sea water is often used for this as it is also a hypertonic saline solution.

Recipe for Hypertonic Nasal Saline Solution (7%)

70 grams of salt in a litre of tap water.

or 3 teaspoons (heaped) of salt in a pint of tap water

To make this less stinging you could add a teaspoon of sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) to the solution.

Make solution fresh daily. You may warm the solution before use, but not warmer than is comfortable to touch.

For chronic nasal symptoms, irrigate the nose 2 to 3 times per day as follows:

1. Obtain a large syringe (20mls or more) from pharmacy. Fill the syringe with warm saline solution. Standing over a sink, insert the tip of the syringe in one side of the nose and, if necessary, pinch the nostril gently around the tip. Aim the syringe toward the back (not the top) of your head and squeeze the syringe. The saline should go up and over your palate, then run out your mouth. Repeat for the other nostril. Clean the syringe.
2. Instead of using a syringe, you may prefer pouring some saline solution in the palm of your hand and "snuffing" it up the nose, one nostril at a time (close the other nostril), and into the back of the throat. Perform with head bent over a sink, and let the solution come out your mouth. May be repeated.

If you are also using a nasal spray, be sure to cleanse the nose with saline before using these sprays, not after.

1 Table salt contains additives (e.g. iodine, preservatives, sugar, etc.). Sea salt is usually free of these, and therefore preferred. (Check labels!)

2 Do not put your used syringe back in the solution as this will contaminate the solution.