



Pediatric Otolaryngology
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Saline Nasal Sprays & Irrigation

Saline nasal sprays

When the lining of the nose and sinuses dries, or if there is mucus (snot and boogers) accumulating, clearing the nose and moisturizing the lining is beneficial. Especially during winter when the air is hot and dry inside and children are susceptible to colds, saline nasal sprays can be used to moisturize nasal passages. Saline sprays clean and aid the natural cleaning system of your nasal passages.

Saline sprays are available over the counter at most drug stores. Some national brands include Saline, Ocean Spray and Ayr, and there is usually a store brand available. Preservative-free saline sprays are also available at most pharmacies.

Side effects:

Nasal sprays may sting slightly. The child may experience irritation usually caused by the preservative in the saline spray. If this happens, use "Simply Saline", a preservative free saline spray.

Nasal saline irrigation

Nasal irrigation is used when greater volumes of saline are needed, for example, when large mucus crusts build up or nasal/sinus polyps block mucus clearance.

To irrigate the nasal passages, use a bulb syringe (used to clear nasal passages of babies), Neti-Pot, or Sinus Rinse® bottle

Saline solution (buffered isotonic) for irrigation (nose or sinuses, etc)

1 teaspoon salt (use pickling or Kosher salt; table salt has additives)

½ teaspoon baking soda

1 quart (or liter) water (filtered or boiled, then cooled)

Solution is good for about one week.

To perform saline irrigation:

Use up to 8 ounces of solution in each nasal cavity 1-2 times daily, or as often as prescribed by a health care provider. Older children can do this in the shower, too

- Lower child's head over a sink and turn the head so that left nostril is down.
- Pour solution from the container into the right nostril.
- Water will drain from the left nostril into the sink.
- Have child gently blow his/her nose.
- Repeat the same process for other nostril.

Have the child breathe through the nose during irrigation to prevent a mess and minimize the amount that enters the throat. Use only enough pressure to move the solution to the back of the nose so it comes out through mouth or nose. This should not cause major discomfort once he/she becomes used to it.