

Associates in Ear, Nose, Throat & Facial Plastic Surgery, PA

**Facial Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery • Electronystagmography
Head and Neck Surgery • Pediatric Otolaryngology**

NASAL SALINE IRRIGATION

The benefits of saline irrigation are three-fold. First, it is a solvent, which cleans mucous, crusts, and other debris from the nasal passages. Secondly, it decongests the nose. Because of the high salt concentration, fluid is pulled out of the membrane. This shrinks the membrane, which improves nasal airflow and opens sinus passages. Third, it improves nasal drainage. Studies have shown that saltwater cleansing of the nasal membranes improves ciliary's beating so that normal mucous is transported better from the sinuses through the nose and into the throat.

RECIPE:

1 liter (quart) of warm water (distilled is preferred)

2-3 heaping tsp. of canning, pickling, or "sea salt" (NOT table salt as it contains a large number of additives including iodine, preservatives, and sugar

1 tsp. Arm & Hammer Baking Soda (pure bicarbonate)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Nose should be irrigated 2 to 3 times per day with a bulb syringe, large medical syringe or water pik with irrigator tip. Stand over a sink and squirt the saltwater into the nose in such a fashion that you are able to spit some of the saline out of your mouth. This suggests that you are doing an adequate job of irrigating the entire nose. Aim the stream of saline as though you are trying to squirt the back of your head, **NOT** the top of you head. It is acceptable to breathe the saltwater directly into the nose.

Warm saltwater is preferred as it is much more comfortable. The amount of salt added will depend of your tolerance. However, the more salt that is added, the greater the decongestant effect. The bicarbonate is a buffer and will allow the saltwater to be less irritating.

If you are also using a nasal medication, such as Ponaris, Beconase, Vancenase, or Nasacort, you should always cleanse the nose first with the saltwater before utilizing the nasal steroid. The nasal steroid is most effective when sprayed onto clean nasal membranes, and it reaches deeper into the nose after cleansing and decongestion.