

Nasal Saline Rinses

1. Make the rinse solution: fluid that goes into your sinuses should always be sterile. To sterilize tap water, boil it and allow it to cool. You can also purchase sterile water in jugs; it is labeled “distilled water”.
2. Turn water into normal saline: there is an exact amount of salt to place into sterile water to make it “isotonic” which means it has the same salt content as the body. Neti pots often come with tabs with a premeasured amount to add, if you have these, follow the instructions on the packet. It is possible to make it yourself with non-iodized salt. The correct ratio is ½ teaspoon non-iodized salt to 1cup (8oz) of water. It is best to make fresh solution for each rinse. Be sure to completely dissolve the salt or packet in the solution before using.
3. Rinse: While in the shower, or in front of a sink, tilt your head to one side and gently pour half the solution into the top nostril, and allow it to flow out the bottom one. Some of the fluid will flow into your mouth or in your throat, allow it to drain or swallow it. Do not use force to blow fluid out, particularly if this is something the doctor warned against. Your doctor may request that you more rigorously rinse your nasal passages. Specific instructions will be given if this is necessary.
4. Repeat: Tilt your head the other way and use the other half in the other nostril.