

# INSTRUCTION SHEET: NASAL WASH TREATMENT

The Student Health Provider has recommended a nasal wash.

## Why should you do a nasal wash?

Many people with allergic rhinitis, allergic asthma, or other lung problem also have a nasal and sinus symptoms. Drainage from your nose and sinuses can make rhinitis and asthma worse, especially at night. A salt-water nasal wash, or nasal irrigation, can help reduce this. A nasal wash:

- Cleans mucus from the nose so medication is more effective
- Cleans allergens and irritants from the nose reducing their impact
- Removes bacteria and viruses from the nose reducing the frequency of infection.
- Decreases swelling in the nose and increases air flow.

## What is the correct nasal wash technique?

- Wash your hands.
- Make the nasal was solution
- Make the saltwater, or saline solution fresh for every nasal wash, using a clean glass.
- To make the saltwater solution, mix one-half teaspoon unionized salt in an 8-ounce glass of warm water. Unionized salt is used because iodized salt may be irritating when used over a long period of time.
- Add a pinch of baking soda. A pinch is a small amount you can pick up between fingers.
- If you are congested, use the entire 8 ounces of saltwater during the nasal was; otherwise, 4 ounces should be enough.
- Discard any unused saltwater and prepare a new saltwater solution before the next nasal wash.

## Techniques for Adults and Older Children:

- **Sinus Rinse Kit Technique:** The Sinus Rinse Kit comes with a Sinus Rinse bottle and mixture packets. When using the Sinus Kit you can use the prepared mixture packets that come with the kit or you can make your own nasal wash solution described above. The Sinus Rinse bottle is filled with saltwater. The bottle is placed against the nostril. After the bottle is squeezed, saltwater comes out of the opposite nostril and may come out of the mouth. The nose is then blown lightly. The procedure is repeated with the other nostril.
- **Water Pik Technique:** Use a Water Pik with a Sinus Irrigator Tip. Pour the saltwater into the water reservoir and set the Water Pik at the lowest possible pressure. Insert the tip just inside your nostril and allow the fluid to run out of your mouth or other nostril. Blow your nose lightly. Repeat the procedure with the other nostril.
- **Hand Technique:** Use your hands for this technique. Pour some saltwater into your palm. Sniff the liquid up your nose, one nostril at a time. Blow your nose lightly. This technique may not be effective but may be used in some situations.
- **Syringe Technique:** Fill a 60 cc (2 ounces) syringe (any medical supply store should have this) with salt water. Place the tip of the syringe just inside one nostril while holding the syringe parallel to the floor. Repeat as needed.

With any technique, the saltwater solution may get into the mouth during the nasal wash and leave a salty taste. You may want to rinse the mouth with water after the nasal wash.

**How do you clean the equipment?**

You must thoroughly clean the equipment used for a nasal wash to prevent the growth of bacteria. It is important for each family member to have his/her own bulb syringe or nasal adaptor.

**Cleaning the Sinus Rinse Bottle or syringe:**

- After each use, rinse the bottle, cap and tubing. Shake off any exercise water and allow the pieces to dry on a clean towel. If you feel the system is contaminated clean the bottle, cap and tubing with rubbing (70 percent isopropyl) alcohol or white, distilled vinegar (1 part vinegar to 3 parts water). After the use of either solution, rinse the pieces well with water and shake off the excess water. Again, allow the pieces to dry on a clean towel.
- The Sinus Rinse bottle is not dishwasher safe.

**Cleaning the Water Pik**

- Refer to the package insert for cleaning directions.

If you have any questions about these nasal wash techniques please ask your healthcare provider.

Your healthcare provider can discuss which technique is best for you.