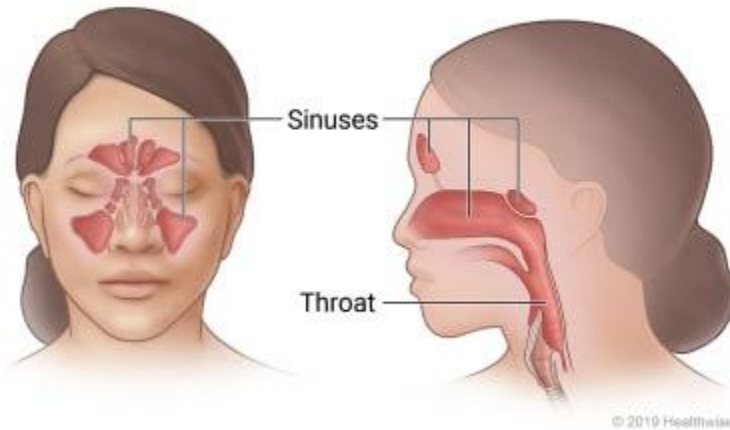


Saline Nasal Washes: Care Instructions



Overview

Saline nasal washes help keep the nasal passages open by washing out thick or dried mucus. This simple remedy can help relieve symptoms of allergies, sinusitis, and colds. It also can make the nose feel more comfortable by keeping the mucous membranes moist. You may notice a little burning sensation in your nose the first few times you use the solution, but this usually gets better in a few days.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- You can buy premixed saline solution in a squeeze bottle or other sinus rinse products at a drugstore. Read and follow the instructions on the label.
- You also can make your own saline solution by adding 1 teaspoon of non-iodized salt and 1 teaspoon of baking soda to 2 cups of distilled or boiled and cooled water.
- If you use a homemade solution, use a squeeze bottle or neti pot to get the solution into your nose. Room temperature or slightly warmed water may be more comfortable. Make sure it isn't hot.
- Stand over the sink with your head tilted forward and slightly to one side. Put only the tip of the syringe or squeeze bottle into the nostril that is farther away from the sink. (The nostril closest to the sink will drain the fluid.) Gently squirt the solution into the nostril and toward the back of your head with your mouth open. The solution should flow out the other nostril. Repeat on the other side. Some sneezing and gagging are normal at first.
- Gently blow your nose.
- Clean the syringe or bottle after each use.
- Repeat this 2 or 3 times a day.

- Use nasal washes gently if you have nosebleeds often.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your symptoms do not get better.
- You have problems doing the nasal washes.