

## What is a saline nasal wash?

Saline is a type of salt water. Salt water pulls fluid out of the swollen parts of your child's nose. A saline nasal wash cleans your child's nose. This helps to improve breathing by clearing your child's nose and opening their sinuses. If your child needs nose spray medicine, they may need a saline nasal wash before the nose spray medicine. This will help the nose spray medicine work better.

You may use a saline nasal wash:

- If your child has a runny nose.
- If your child's nose is congested (stopped up).
- When advised by your child's doctor.

## How do I make a saline nasal wash?

- You can buy saline nasal wash packets at any grocery store or pharmacy. They do not have to be name brand.
- You can buy premixed saline nasal wash at any grocery store or pharmacy. These are ready to use, right out of the bottle.
- You can also make your own saline nasal wash mixture.
  - In a clean container, mix:
    - 3 heaping teaspoons (tsp) of Iodine Free Salt
    - 1 rounded teaspoon of baking soda
  - **Store the mixture in a small airtight container for no longer than 24 hours.** Get rid of it sooner if the mixture looks cloudy.
  - Make a new mixture every day.

## How do I use a saline nasal wash?

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Fill a sinus rinse bottle (such as NeilMed or store brand) with 8 ounces (oz), or 1 cup, of lukewarm distilled or boiled water that has cooled off.
- Add the store-bought saline nasal wash packet or 1 teaspoon of the homemade mixture to the sinus rinse bottle.
- Tighten the cap on the bottle. Place one finger over the cap, and shake the bottle gently to dissolve the mixture.
- Hold the bottle over the sink, and open the cap.
- Squirt the saline wash gently into one of your child's nostrils (the opening of the nose). Have your child lean forward over the sink. Let the saline wash come out of the other nostril.



**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

# Saline nasal wash, continued

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- It is normal for some of the saline wash to drain into your child's mouth. Ask your child to spit it out if this happens.
- Blow your child's nose well. They may feel pressure in their ears. This is normal.
- Repeat the saline nose wash in your child's other nostril.
- Repeat the saline nasal wash, as needed, until your child's nose is clean.
- Use nasal spray medicines as advised by your child's doctor.

## How do I clean the bottle?

- Rinse the bottle, cap and tube with warm running water.
- Put 2 to 3 drops of baby shampoo or dishwashing soap in the bottle.
- Tighten the cap on the bottle. Place one finger over the cap, and shake the bottle gently.
- Squeeze the bottle, and fill it with soapy water. This makes sure the whole bottle gets clean.
- Rinse soap well from all parts of the bottle.
- Place the bottle on a plain paper towel to dry.

## When should I call the doctor?

Please call the doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your child or their care.

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

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