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How to Rinse the Nose with Salt Water (Buffered Hypertonic Saline Nasal Irrigation)

Instructions: Make the salt water and baking soda mixture according to the recipe. Plan to rinse the nose with it 2 to 3 times each day. You will need a bulb/ear syringe (90 cc) or a Water Pik to get the mixture into the nose.

- Pour some of the mixture into a clean bowl. Many people like to warm it in a microwave oven to about body temperature. Be sure that the salt water is **NOT HOT**.
- Fill the syringe or Water Pik with the mixture from the bowl. **DO NOT** put your used syringe back into the jar, because that will contaminate your weekly supply of salt water and soda.
- Stand over the sink or in the shower and squirt the mixture into each side of your nose. Aim the stream toward the back of your head, **NOT** the top of your head. This lets you spit some of the salt water out of your mouth. It will not hurt you if you swallow a little.
- Most people notice a mild burning feeling the first few times they use the mixture. This usually goes away in a few days. Please call our office if you have any questions.

For young children: You can put the mixture into a small spray container like a saline spray or nasal steroid spray bottle. Squirt it *many* times into each side of the nose. **DO NOT FORCE** your child to lie down. It is easier to do when sitting or standing.

If you use a nasal steroid: You should *always* use the mixture first, *then* use the nasal steroid spray prescribed by your doctor such as Flonase, Vancenase, Nasonex or Nasacort. The steroid works better when it is sprayed onto nasal membranes that have been cleaned and decongested by the salt water and soda. Then the steroid medicine will reach deeper into the nose and sinuses.

The Benefits:

- When you rinse your nose with this salt water and baking soda mixture, it washes crusts and other debris from your nose.
- Salty water pulls fluid out of swollen membranes. Washing the inside of the nose decongests it and improves air flow. Not only does this make breathing easier, but it helps open the sinus passages.
- Studies show that this mixture of concentrated salt water and baking soda (bicarbonate) helps the nasal membrane to work better and moves mucus out of the nose faster.

The Recipe:

- Carefully clean and rinse a 1-quart glass jar. Fill the clean jar with tap water or bottled water. You do not have to boil the water.
- Add 2 to 3 heaping teaspoons of kosher salt. **DO NOT** use table salt. Table salt has unwanted additives. You can ask for kosher salt at a grocery store.
- Add 1 rounded teaspoon of baking soda (pure bicarbonate).
- Stir or shake before each use. Store at room temperature. After one week, pour out any mixture that is left over and make a new recipe.
- If the mixture seems *too strong*, use *less salt* – try 1½ to 2 teaspoons of salt. For children, it is best to start with a weaker salt water mixture. Then gradually increase to using 2 to 3 heaping teaspoons of salt, or whatever the child will accept.