

ADVANCED ALLERGY & ASTHMA SPECIALISTS

DENISE GONZÁLEZ, MD

Diplomate of the American Board of Allergy and Immunology

HOW TO RINSE SINUSES WITH SALINE

- 1) Obtain either a nasal rinse bottle or a neti pot (looks like a tea pot or Aladdin's lamp).
- 2) Pot/bottle should hold 10 ounces (~300ml) of fluid.
- 3) Purchase a gallon of Distilled water (which is sterile); if it does not state the word *DISTILLED*, it is not to be used.
- 4) Initially wash the neti pot/nasal rinse bottle:
 - Wash with 2 or 3 drops of dish washing detergent and rinse very well.
 - Shake pot/bottle very well to remove as much excess water as possible.
 - Set to dry on a paper towel in a well aerated area.
- 5) *IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THE POT/BOTTLE CONTAIN ABSOLUTELY NO WATER BEFORE STARTING*, as tap water is not sterile. Pot/bottle must be absolutely dry before adding Distilled water. If needed, dry well in microwave.
- 6) Fill the pot/bottle up to the 8 ounce line with distilled water and add a salt packet (it has salt and baking soda).
- 7) Warm water in microwave and swirl container to assure salt is dissolved and warmth is distributed.
- 8) Stop the drain of the bathroom sink and with pot/bottle in hand place the tip up to one nostril.
- 9) If using a bottle device do not jam the bottle into your nose altering the shape of your nostril. Gently squeeze the bottle to dispense water into your nose and sinuses. Water should flow out the opposite nostril.
- 10) If using the tea pot, tip your head to one side so your ears are parallel to the counter surface, as if you were laying your head on a pillow. Place the tip of the spout at the entrance of your top nostril and pour. Water with mucous will pour out of the bottom nostril.
- 11) Repeat the same procedure using the opposite nostril.
- 12) It is important to cork the sink with the stopper so the rinse water remains in order to visualize what is pouring out of your sinuses.
- 13) In addition, **DURING THE FIRST SEVERAL ATTEMPTS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO CLOSE YOUR AIRWAY** the same way you close your airway to gargle, so saline does not enter your lungs should the fluid travel down the back of your throat. If saline slips into your airway, you will not die!!! It is sterile and safe, you will simply cough a while.
- 14) It takes some practice to perfect your technique for your anatomy and comfort. **Do not give up, you will eventually get it right**. Once you have all the details for dispensing the saline into your sinuses down to a routine, you will find great relief in rinsing your sinuses.
- 15) Sinus rinses should always be done BEFORE a shower, and ideally twice a day, in order to decrease mucous production and thus, swelling over time. Since mucous has substances which cause swelling, by daily rinsing you will reduce and prevent further nasal and sinus obstruction, as well as the need for future sinus surgery.