



ADVANCED SINUS  
AND  
ALLERGY CENTER

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# Sinonasal Irrigations

## Neti Pot Style

Irrigating (rinsing) the nose and sinuses with salt water (saline) or medicated rinses can be very helpful to lessen or prevent nasal blockage and nasal drainage, decrease inflammation (swelling) and treat infection. There are many different types of irrigation devices, irrigation solutions and techniques.

Keeping the irrigation system clean and free of contamination to prevent re-infection is an important part of proper nasal and sinus rinses. You should clean your irrigation system daily. Some devices may be washed in a conventional dishwasher (on the top shelf only). Hand cleansing may be performed with a weak solution of Betadine (available in pharmacies) or bleach (1 part bleach to 100 parts water). After cleansing, rinse the device a few times with sterilized water or saline before using again.

### Irrigation Solution

Straight tap water can become a source of bacterial contamination and **SHOULD NOT BE USED**. The CDC recommends using only distilled water. You may make your own salt water if you are willing to take the time. If you would like to learn how to make your own salt water, see our supplementary handout for our Homemade Irrigations.

### Irrigation Technique:

Do not speak or swallow during irrigations. This can change the pressure in your ears and nose causing infectious mucus to be drawn into the sinuses or middle ear.

### Neti Pot Style irrigations:

In people who have not previously had sinus surgery the best method of rinsing is described the Neti pot technique. You can watch the video on how to properly use the Neti Pot at [http://www.oprah.com/slideshow/oprahshow/slideshow1\\_ss\\_oz\\_20070426/6](http://www.oprah.com/slideshow/oprahshow/slideshow1_ss_oz_20070426/6) .

The goal is to rinse both nasal cavities through one nostril by having a gentle continuous flow of saline solution pass from one nostril to the other. It is awkward until you get used to it. To keep the solution from running into your mouth, breathe continuously through your mouth.

1. Fill your Neti Pot with saline or other irrigation solution.
2. Lower your head over a sink. Turn your neck so your left nostril is down.
3. Keep your nose slightly higher than your mouth.
4. Pour solution from the container into your **RIGHT** nostril.
5. Water will drain from your left nostril into the sink.
6. Gently blow your nose.
7. Repeat the same process for the **LEFT** nostril.