

## Nasal Hygiene

The nose has many positive effects on the air you breathe in that you may not be aware of.

- Temperature regulation
- Filtration and removal of particulate matter
- Humidification
- Defense against infections

There are several things you can do to help keep your nose healthy. Foremost is nasal hygiene. This will help with your nose's natural function and keep it moist and healthy.

Techniques to accomplish this are outlined below. These will help with nasal dryness, nasal crusting, and nose bleeds. They also assist with clearing thick mucus that cause you to blow your nose frequently and may be associated with thick postnasal drip.

1. Use nasal saline daily. You can buy small bottles of this over-the-counter at the drug store or grocery store. Some brand names are: Ocean, Sea Mist, Ayr. Apply 2-3 sprays each nostril several times a day. If your nose feels dry or have had recent nasal surgery, try to use it every couple of hours. There is no medicine in it so it can be used as often as you like. Do NOT use the sprays containing decongestants.

The appropriate way to apply nasal sprays: Place the nozzle just inside your nostril and point it towards the corner of your eye. Often, it is helpful to use the right-hand to spray into the left nasal cavity and use the left-hand to spray into the right side.

2. Use nasal saline irrigations and flushing. Several prepackaged, sanitary preparations are available over-the-counter: NeilMed Sinus Rinse, SinuCleanse, Simply Saline, Ayr. Use this 1-2 times a day.

We can also provide you with a recipe to use at home. Just ask us.

To prevent reintroducing bacteria back into your nose, please keep your irrigation equipment clean and dry between uses. Throw away and replace reusable irrigation equipment every 3 weeks.

A word of preference. The Neti Pot can be useful for moisturization. However, we may recommend you use a technique that will allow for flushing of your nose.

3. Use Vaseline petroleum jelly or Aquaphor. You can apply this gently to each nostril 2-3 times a day to promote moisturization for your nose. You may also use triple antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or Bacitracin. These can all be bought over-the-counter.
4. Consider other nasal emollients. A few preparations are available over-the-counter. Ponaris, Nose Better, Pretz. Ask your pharmacist what is available. Also, some nasal saline sprays have additives such as aloe and these are helpful.
5. Consider using a humidifier at home. If your nose feels dry and/or you have frequent nose bleeds, you can buy a humidifier for your home. Be cautious in using these if you have mold allergies.
6. Avoid excessive manual manipulation of your nose and nostrils. Frequent rubbing of your nostrils and the passing of tissues or fingers in your nostrils may aggravate nasal irritation from dryness and nose bleeds.