

Patient information

Nasal irrigation

There are many reasons or conditions in which we may suggest irrigating (douching or washing) your nose with a salt water (saline) solution including:

- Allergic rhinitis (inflammation of the nasal lining caused by an allergy)
- Sinusitis (inflammation of the sinuses) with and without polyps
- Nasal crusting conditions
- After nasal or sinus surgery

We suggest using the Neilmed® Sinus Rinse™ system, which uses a compressible plastic bottle to deliver a salt solution in to the nose and sinuses. It works by:

- Washing away allergens (substances that can cause an allergic reaction) and other irritants
- Washing away mucus and catarrh
- Softening any crusting
- Reducing inflammation

In itself these actions may improve symptoms such as congested stuffy, or runny nose, facial pain or pressure, dry cough and loss of smell or taste. The wash will also help prepare the nasal lining for application of any other medications that we advise, for example an intra-nasal steroid spray.

Neilmed® Sinus Rinse™

The kit contains a 240ml compressible plastic bottle and sachets. The sachets contain sodium chloride (salt) and sodium bicarbonate which create a pH neutral saline solution when dissolved in water. The bottle and sachets are classed as a medical device rather than a medicine, so unfortunately cannot be prescribed.



There are several different types of Neilmed® Sinus Rinse™ sachets and you should make sure that you buy the isotonic ones, this means a similar salt concentration to that found in the body. If you chose not to buy the sachets, you can make your own saline solution using the following method:

- One teaspoon of non-iodised salt
- Half a teaspoon of bicarbonate soda
- 1 pint (500 - 600ml) sterile or boiled water, which has been allowed to cool to at least body temperature (37°C / 98°F)

Dissolve the salt and bicarbonate in the cooled water. This can be administered using the Neilmed® Sinus Rinse™ bottle or similar (eg a nasal irrigation Neti pot). If you find this overly strong, you can reduce the salt concentration to half as required. It is recommended that any unused solution should be discarded, and a fresh solution prepared for each administration.

We would usually suggest twice a day administration in most cases. A Neilmed® Sinus Rinse™ kit contains a detailed patient information booklet. This includes step-by-step instructions and should be read carefully before use. A useful demonstration video is available on the manufacturer's website (www.neilmed.com/uk/directions-videos.php).

There are rarely any side effects of nasal irrigation, however sometimes people experience some ear discomfort while rinsing. After finishing you may experience drainage of left-over solution from the nose, sometimes many minutes or hours later. Both of these side effects can be minimised by following the instructions in the booklet in the pack and on the website. Although no harm comes from swallowing the solution, it can be unpleasant and is best avoided.

In certain cases, we may recommend adding medication to the rinse bottle. This will usually be small vials of BUDESONDINE 1mg in 2ml (0.5mg/ml) to be added to the bottle with the usual rinse solution and administered twice per day to each side for the designated period of time by your doctor.