



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice on nasal douching

Information for patients

This leaflet tells patients how to clean out their nose using a nasal douche. If you do not understand anything or have any other concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

Reasons for douching

Your surgeon will ask you to douche (rinse out) your nose after your operation. This will help to remove crusts and clots, and keep your sinuses clean. This will help to prevent infection and will also reduce the urge to blow or pick your nose, which could cause your nose to bleed.

It is usual for your nose to feel blocked for the first 2-3 weeks following surgery, until the lining has settled down and crusts and clots are removed.

From the moment you are sent home from hospital, regular nasal douches with slightly salted warm water will greatly help your recovery.

Nasal douching essentially involves sucking up some water into each nostril and allowing it to go down the back of the nose before blowing some of it back out through your nostrils. It is best to do this about three times a day to help remove some of the clots and crusts that build up in the nose after this sort of surgery. This should be continued until the clots and crusts cease to come away during the douching.

Preparing a douche

Follow these instructions to make enough nasal douche solution for four applications. You will need:

1 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda

1 teaspoon of salt

1 pint of partly cooled boiled water (at body temperature)

- Take a pint of warm, not hot, water (cooled boiled tap water) and dissolve one teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda and salt in it.
- The alternative is to use NeilMed sinus rinse which can be widely available in pharmacies. The kit consists of a bottle and some powder (which is pretty similar to the sodium bicarbonate and salt solution).

How to douche

- Cup the palm of one hand and pour a small amount of the water into it.
- Sniff the water into your nostril.
- Continue douching until your nose feels comfortable. You may not need to use the whole amount of the solution.

You are advised to make a fresh solution each time it is needed and sniff it up your nose. Some solution will pass into the throat via the back of the nose and should be spat out.

If you are advised to use nose drops, please take them after your douching, or they will be washed out by the douche and be ineffective!

Alternatively, if you find douching your nose difficult, you may be given the option of using a spray such as *Sterimar*. This is a salty solution in a spray can that you can buy over the counter from a chemist. It has a specially shaped nozzle that fits in your nostril and you may find this easier to use. Ward staff should be able to advise you on this and give you an information leaflet that will assist you to buy this spray from a chemist (the hospital pharmacy does not supply this).

Contact us

- Dorrell Ward 0118 322 7172
- ENT outpatient department 0118 322 7139
- Appointments (CAT 1) 0118 322 7139

Visit the Trust website at www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Dorrell Ward, September 2018
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