BUFFERED HYPERTONIC SALINE NASAL IRRIGATION

The Benefits

1. When you irrigate with buffered hypertonic saline, it acts as a solvent and washes crusts and other debris from your nose.
2. The high salt concentration pulls fluid out of swollen membranes and shrinks them. This decongests the nose and improved air flow. This helps open sinus passages.
3. Studies show that hypertonic saline mixed into an alkaline solution with bicarbonate improves the important function of the nasal membrane.

The Recipe

1. Thoroughly cleanse a one-quart glass jar and fill with tap or bottled water. Boiling the water is not necessary.
2. Add 2 to 3 heaping teaspoons of "pickling/canning" salt. **DO NOT** use table salt as it contains many undesirable additives.
3. Add 1 teaspoon of Arm & Hammer Baking Soda (pure bicarbonate).
4. Stir or shake before each use and store at room temperature. Discard after one week. If the solution seems too strong, decrease the amount of salt added to 1 to 1 ½ teaspoons. With children it is often best to start with the weaker solution and advance to 2 to 3 heaping teaspoons (or whatever the child will accept).
5. Alternatively; use the Neil Med saline rinse product available in the pharmacy with prepackaged salt/bicarbonate mixture

The Instructions

Plan to irrigate your nose with buffered hypertonic saline 2 times per day. Use a bulb/ear syringe or the plastic irrigation bottle available in the pharmacy (Ayr, Neil Med). You may also simply pour some of the solution in the palm of your hand and then sniff it into your nose; take 4 - 5 “sniffs” each nostril. Pour some of the solution into a clean bowl. **DO NOT** put your used syringe back into the quart jar because that will contaminate your solution. Many people prefer to warm the solution slightly in a microwave. Be sure that the solution is **NOT HOT**. Stand over the sink (some people do this in the shower) and squirt the solution into each side of your nose, aiming the stream toward the back of your head, **NOT** the top of your head. Perform the rinse with your head tilted down. This allows you to spit some of the saltwater out of your mouth. It will not harm you if you swallow a little.

For younger children, you may want to place the solution into a spray container such as “ocean spray” or “nasal steroid” container and squirt many times into each side of the nose. **DO NOT FORCE** your child to lie down. It is easier to do in a sitting or standing position.

If you use a nasal steroid, such as Flonase/Nasonex/Nasacort, you should always use buffered hypertonic saline solution first, and **THEN** use your nasal steroid spray 15 – 20 minutes later.

Most people experience a mild burning sensation the first few times they use buffered hypertonic saline solution, but this usually goes away in a few days. Please call our office if you have any problems or questions.