

Children's Ear Nose & Throat Center

Sub-specialists of Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

A member of the  Seton Healthcare Family

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Nose Care Instructions

Keep the nose moisturized and clean with saline!

Normal saline nose drops are a salty liquid that is like the fluids your body normally produces (tears, mucus), which makes them more comfortable in the nose. Saline is used to moisten the lining of the nose or break up thick saline secretions. Nose care:

- **Keeps the wet lining of the nose from drying out, this prevents:**

- Build up of mucus crusting
- Nose bleeds - which frequently occur after the sensitive lining of nose dries and cracks, breaking a blood vessel

- **Cleans the mucus out which prevents:**

- Extra mucus from building up that blocks the nasal airway, which can make breathing and feeding difficult, particularly for babies
- Nose inflammation which can block the nose and the eustachian tubes leading to the ears, increasing the risk of sinus infections and ear infections
- Post-nasal drip resulting in sore throat, cough, and irritation

- **Allows nasal spray medication to work better**

- Saline cleans off the lining of the inside of the nose before using the medicated spray to let the medication get to the inflamed nasal tissue



Clean your Child's Nose: the best time for nose cleaning in babies is just before feeding which allows them to breathe through the nose with ease and improve feeding efficiency. If your child uses a medicated nasal spray, clean the nose before using the medicated spray to avoid washing it away.

1. **Use nasal saline spray** - Examples include Simply Saline Baby (or other wide-tipped pediatric aerosolized saline spray) or make a fresh saline solution at home (recipe below) and apply with a clean dropper or syringe)

- Lay your child on their back and tilt their head back slightly. Have another adult help you gently hold their head still if needed until they get used to "nose time"
- For children under 2 years old: administer 1 spray/drop in each nostril
- For children over 2 years old: administer 2 sprays/drops in each nostril

- If the spray bottle or dropper touches the nose, rinse the tip in hot water and dry with a clean towel. Do not use the same bottle or dropper for other children.



2. **Wait several minutes** to allow the saline to loosen the mucus in the nose

3. If your child is older, have them **gently blow their nose** 2-3 times, or until the nose is clear and wipe away any visible mucus from the outside of the nose

4. If your child is younger, suction each nostril gently 2-3 times, or until the nose is clear and wipe away any visible mucus from the outside of the nose

- A nose-frida or other wide-tipped suction is preferable to bulb suction because it does not penetrate too far into the nose, and creates a good, comfortable seal at the nostrils to suction the whole nose at once
- If using bulb suction - insert just inside the nostril (about 1 cm deep) to avoid inserting too far and causing pain/trauma
- Clean the suction device after each use in hot soapy water and let dry

5. Use saline spray again to moisturize the nose after suctioning

6. Repeat 2-3 times per day as needed, and no more than 4 times per day to avoid irritating the nose



Moisturize Your Child's Nose

1. **Use nasal saline spray** - Examples include Simply Saline Baby (or other wide-tipped pediatric aerosolized saline spray) or make a fresh saline solution at home (recipe below) and apply with a clean dropper or syringe)

- For children under 2 years old: administer 1 spray/drop in each nostril, 5-10 times a day
- For children over 2 years old: administer 2 sprays/drops in each nostril, 5-10 times a day

2. Apply Vaseline (petroleum jelly) ointment to each nostril 1-2 times a day

- Dip a clean Q-tip into the ointment
- Roll the Q-tip gently just inside the nostril to coat the inside of the nostril
- The ointment will slowly melt back and coat the deeper lining of the nose

Recipe for Normal Saline Solution

It is very important to use a **fresh** saline solution because bacteria can grow in saline and bacteria can lead to infections. If you are buying a saline solution, replace it after its expiration date and use one separate bottle for each child.

Make Your Own Saline Solution:

Mix 8 ounces (about 1 cup) of distilled or boiled and cooled tap water with ½ teaspoon of non-iodized table salt and a pinch of baking soda.

Make a fresh supply of saline solution every time you do a nasal rinse!