

Department of Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT)

Using a nasal douche

If you have a nasal condition or have recently had nasal surgery (or both), using a nasal douche can help. It helps clear catarrh (a build-up of mucus) and dry crusts in the nose. It also helps to encourage smooth recovery of the nasal lining and removal of sticky discharge after surgery. The nose tends to feel fresher after douching.

When to start douching after surgery

If you have had surgery, you should be usually start using the nasal douche 1 – 2 days after the operation or as instructed by your surgeon. Use it in the morning and evening for at least 2 weeks. Your hospital doctor will let you know if they want you to continue to use it for longer period.

It is common for the nose to feel very blocked in the first week after operation, especially if plastic internal splints are in place. Douching will become easier to use after the splints are removed.

If you are also using nasal drops or sprays, make sure to use the douche **before** these medications are applied. If you douche afterward, the medication will be washed out and won't work.

Preparing a douche

1. Take a large glass or about half a pint of slightly warm water that has been previously boiled and then cooled.
2. Add ¼ teaspoon each of table salt, sugar and bicarbonate of soda (sodium bicarbonate) to the water.
3. Stir well until everything is dissolved.
4. Your nasal douche solution is now ready for use.



Patient Information

Using a nasal douche

- Pour a small amount of the mixture into your cupped hand or measure an eggcup-sized amount.
- Bring your hand to your nostrils and sniff the mixture gently into your nose.
- The solution will move into the nose and then to the back of the nose where it joins the throat. Let it drain naturally from your nostrils and spit out any of the solution that enters your mouth into a bowl or sink.
- Alternatively, you can use a clean spray bottle or a syringe to gently squirt the solution into your nostril. Although it may feel strange at first, try to continue as this method is effective.
- **Repeat until you have used the entire glass.**

Use the nasal douche morning and night or as directed by your doctor.

Don't be alarmed by the material that you may spit out. It can be blood stained and vary in colours, thickness and shape.

For more information or clarification please contact the ENT Department on 024 7696 7007.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the department on 024 7696 7007, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Document History

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