

Nasal Irrigation (Neti Pot)

Neti (or nasal irrigation) is the process of rinsing the nasal passages with a warm saline solution. Practiced by yogis and Ayurvedic practitioners for thousands of years, this odd yet simple therapy can be done daily for maintenance or several times per day to correct acute sinus problems and drain mucus from the head. The salt in the solution breaks up excess mucus while the water rinses away pollen, dust, bacteria and other irritants residing in the nasal passages.

You will need a Neti Pot and a salt solution. Neti Pots are available at any pharmacy or health food store, and come in a wide array of styles and prices. The shape/style of the neti pot is largely a matter of personal preference; the inexpensive ones offered by Neil-Med are just as effective as the pricey specialty designs.

Step 1 (Preparing your saline solution): Pre-mixed packets can be purchased and mixed with water, or you can make your own solution by stirring $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of non-iodized sea salt into 2 cups of lukewarm water (Celtic sea salt or Himalayan salt work very well). To avoid irritating or burning the nasal lining, it is important to use purified or distilled water (**NOT** tap water) that is warmed to 96-98 degrees (about body temperature). If you feel as if you snorted pool water up your nose, the water you're using is not purified/distilled, or the temperature is too cold. With the right solution and temperature, there should be no stinging, burning or irritation.

Step 2 (Rinsing the sinuses): Now pour half of the salt solution into the pot, and insert the teapot tip into the left nostril just tight enough to create a seal. Lean your head over a sink or basin. Tilt the pot up (like you're pouring a cup of tea) while tipping your head slightly to the right as you breathe through your mouth. The water will flow in through the left nostril and pour out of the right (remember to keep breathing through your mouth). If the water does not flow, try adjusting the angle of your head, or leaning a little farther forward. When the pot has emptied, remove the tip from your nostril and **gently** blow out your nose to expel any excess water/mucus. Repeat this process with the other half of the solution on the right side.

If you have never used a neti pot before, chances are it will feel a little strange the first time. Don't be discouraged, though, as repeated applications and familiarity often overcome the strangeness, leaving just the benefit of improved breathing and reduced sinus infection and inflammation. This is also a great therapy to use after exposure to dusty conditions to remove debris trapped in the nasal passages!

