

Sinus Irrigation

Using a saline solution to irrigate the sinuses and nasal passageways may be a very useful technique to deal with acute and chronic sinus conditions. This technique may greatly enhance any other therapies that are being directed toward the sinus areas.

The main advantage of this techniques is to bring a slightly saline solution through the nasal area, and back through some of the sinus cavities, and especially to the postnasal region. These small passageways, nooks, and crannies are ideal environments for viruses and bacteria to hide.

Indications and Contraindications

Any kind of a headcold or sinus condition may benefit.

DO NOT DO SINUS IRRIGATION if you cannot breathe fully through your nose. If you cannot get air through these passageways, you will not get water through either. If the nasal/sinus passageways are blocked, try doing alternating hot and cold. (5 mins. hot followed immediately by 5 mins. cold for at least two repetitions. A bag of frozen peas and a hot water bottle work well.) Alternating hot and cold flushes heat from the surface to deep and back, as well as expanding and contracting tissue which may loosen the stuck mucous enough to clear it out. If so, irrigation may be done. If it is still difficult to breathe through the nose, continue with alternating hot and cold only.

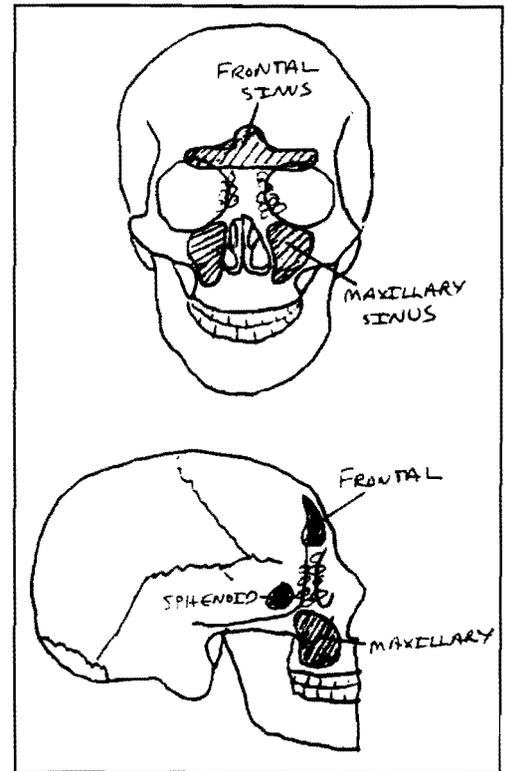
Irrigation Process

The basic idea is to move a warm, body temperature saline solution through the nose, back through the post nasal area into the throat, and then spit it out the mouth. To do this you need:

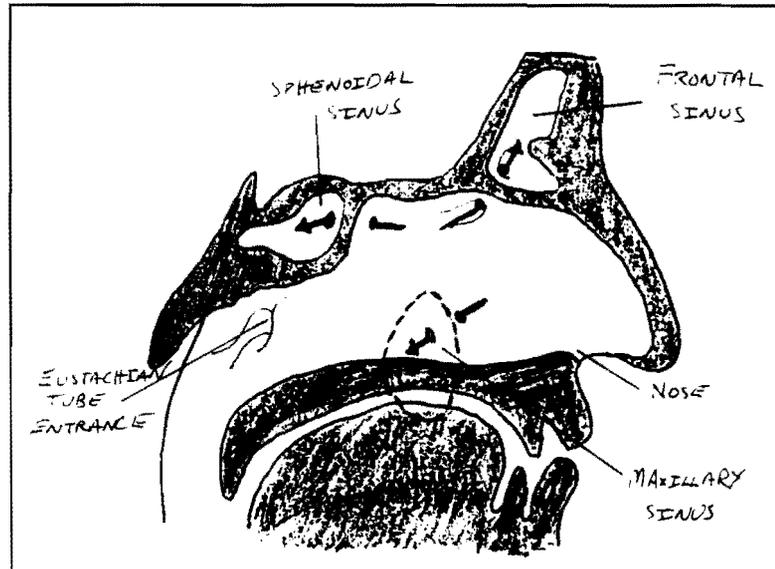
- One half cup warm water (body temperature approx. 98 degrees) The mucous membranes are very sensitive to too much heat or cold
- One -eighth to one -fourth teaspoon of salt
- Some kind of utensil- large eyedropper, or pediatric oral medication syringe (available at most pharmacies)
- I use approximately 5-7 ml (1-1 1/2 tsp.) at a time. Too much water is difficult to control, too little won't get all the way through.
- Do each nostril twice. Daily for acute conditions, every other day for chronic.
- Rinse and clean the utensils

Sinus irrigation is a little unusual, and it takes a few times to get used to it. However, it should feel refreshing, similar to gargling with salt water when you have a sore throat.

The first application may clear out (alot) of mucous (this is good). The second application should irrigate the mucous membranes directly. With repeated applications, this gets very easy to do. Remember to keep your utensils clean.



Sinus locations



Nasal passage - side view

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