



The Himalayan Institute Neti Pot™ Safety Guide

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Introduction

The Neti Pot is a time-honored, doctor-recommended, and clinically tested way to cleanse the nasal passages. Using it regularly can markedly lessen symptoms of colds, allergies, sinus problems and post-nasal drip. Multiple studies prove that nasal irrigation “improves sinus-related quality of life, decreases symptoms, and decreases medication use in patients with frequent sinusitis,”^[1] along with conventional medicines.^{[2][3]} Additionally, “there is evidence that saline is beneficial in the treatment of the symptoms of chronic rhinosinusitis when used as a sole modality of treatment.”^[4]

Even when symptom free, nasal cleansing loosens and washes away built up mucus in the nose and allows for freer breathing. Regular use of the Neti Pot reduces inflammation in the nasal passages, increasing the flow of air through the nose. Yoga practitioners have known this for thousands of years and appreciate the free flow of air through both nostrils during asana and meditation.

To ensure that you get the maximum benefit, and to protect yourself from infection or re-infection during nasal irrigation, we have created this safety guideline. Please read and follow these instructions.

Step 1) Making Saline Solution

Rinsing the nasal passages with a properly mixed warm saline (salt water) solution doesn't burn. The saline solution you will be making has the same concentration of salt as tears and other body fluids. This makes the solution soothing to the mucus membranes of the nose. It is best to use a pure, non-iodized salt, such as Neti Salt™, which is pure sodium chloride. Other minerals found in sea or table salt can be irritating to the nasal passages.

Use a level ¼ teaspoon for finely ground salt (such as Neti Salt) or up to ½ teaspoon of coarser ground non-iodized salt.

Mix with 8 ounces of warm sterilized water until the salt is completely dissolved. Always use sterilized water, such as boiled or distilled water, during nasal cleansing. If you boil your water, please make sure it is cooled to body temperature before using in your Neti Pot.

Trouble shooting:

If the solution irritates your nose, it is either not salty enough, or too salty. Taste the solution: If you can barely taste the salt, you've used too little and need to use more.

If it is very salty, you've used too much salt and need to use less.

Step 2) Water Quality

Because the nasal passages are so close to many critical organs, it is important to use pure water to cleanse them. **Always use sterilized water, such as boiled or distilled water, during nasal cleansing.** If you boil your water, please make sure it is cooled to body temperature before using your Neti Pot.

Step 3) Head Position and the Nasal Cleanse

Correct head position ensures a comfortable flow of water through the nasal passages.

Lean over the sink so you are looking directly into the basin and then rotate your head to the side so that one nostril is directly above the other. The forehead should remain level with the chin or slightly higher.

Gently insert the spout into the upper nostril to create a comfortable seal. Keep your mouth open and raise the handle of the Neti Pot gradually so that the saline solution flows in through the upper nostril and out through the lower nostril.



Trouble shooting:

- If the water doesn't flow, lift the pot a bit higher, but avoid turning the head over the shoulder. This can cause water to flow into the Eustachian tube and make the lower ear feel clogged. This is uncomfortable, but not dangerous, as the water will drain over the next few hours.
- If the water drains out through the mouth, lower the forehead in relation to the chin.
- If you get a headache after using the Neti Pot, you probably had your forehead lower than your chin, and some water drained into the frontal sinus. This will drain out, but is uncomfortable and best avoided by keeping the forehead higher than the chin.
- Sometimes the nose is too clogged to allow water to flow well. If this is the case, stop and try later.

Step 4) After the Wash

- After you are finished cleansing one nostril, rotate the head so you are looking into the sink and exhale sharply through both nostrils to clear the nasal passages of excess mucus and water. Quickly drawing the abdomen toward the spine with each exhalation will make your exhalations more forceful. You might like to use a tissue, but do not compress one nostril while you are blowing through the other; the pressure generated can cause damage to the sensitive inner ear structures.

Step 5) Turn your head to the opposite side and Repeat steps 3 and 4.

Step 6) Exercises after the Wash

You may want to do a few simple exercises after the exhalations in step 4 to expel any saline solution remaining in your nose.

Exercise 1: Forward Bending

Bend forward from the waist far enough so that the forehead is pointing towards the floor. Hold this position for a few seconds, and then return to standing. Follow this movement with a few exhalations.

Exercise 2: Alternate Toe Touching

Place your feet 2 or 3 feet apart. Raise the arms out to the side at shoulder height. Slowly bend from the waist and bring the left hand to the right knee, shin, or foot, whichever you can reach without straining.

Reach up to the ceiling with the right hand, turn the head gently and look toward the raised hand. Hold this position for a few seconds. Come back to standing and repeat the movement to the left. Exhale through the nose.

When you have practiced one or both of these exercise routines a few times, you'll find that they take less time than brushing and flossing your teeth.

7) Washing Your Pot

Because bacteria can grow on wet, dark surfaces, the Neti Pot should be cleaned after each use. You can wash the Neti Pot by hand with hot water and mild soap, and rinse well. After cleaning, let the Neti Pot air dry before the next use.

Always clean your Neti Pot and never share it, even with family members.

When cleaning, remember:

The Ceramic Neti Pot is dishwasher safe.

The Eco Neti Pot is **not** dishwasher safe.

Do **not** microwave either Neti Pot.

Conclusion:

Nasal cleansing has been used for hundreds of years by millions of people without problems. These guidelines will ensure that this is the case for you too!



Sources

1. Rabago, D.; Zgierska, A.; Mundt, M.; Barrett, B.; Bobula, J.; Maberry, R. (2002). "Efficacy of daily hypertonic saline nasal irrigation among patients with sinusitis: A randomized controlled trial". *The Journal of family practice* 51(12): 1049–1055. [PMID 12540331](#).
2. Rabago, D.; Pasic, T.; Zgierska, A.; Mundt, M.; Barrett, B.; Maberry, R. (2005). "The Efficacy of Hypertonic Saline Nasal Irrigation for Chronic Sinonasal Symptoms". *Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery* 133 (1): 3–8. [10.1016/j.otohns.2005.03.002](#). [PMID 16025044](#).
3. Tomooka, L. T.; Murphy, C.; Davidson, T. M. (2000). "Clinical Study and Literature Review of Nasal Irrigation". *The Laryngoscope* 110 (7): 1189–1193. [10.1097/00005537-200007000-00023](#). [PMID 10892694](#).
4. Harvey, R.; Hannan, S. A.; Badia, L.; Scadding, G. (2007). Harvey, Richard. ed. "Nasal saline irrigations for the symptoms of chronic rhinosinusitis". *Cochrane database of systematic reviews (Online)* (3): CD006394. [10.1002/14651858.CD006394.pub2](#). [PMID 17636843](#).