

## **I am getting discomfort in my ears – should I continue douching?**

You are advised to refrain from douching if suffering from acute ear pain or infection as doing so may cause greater discomfort. Wait until symptoms subside or consult your doctor for further advice.

## **How can I improve nasal drainage after douching?**

If you find residual solution is not draining effectively after douching, try tilting your head from side to side whilst bending forwards to encourage sinus emptying.

## **What if I am finding douching difficult or having problems with the technique?**

Devices to assist with nasal douching are available from most local pharmacies. These involve irrigation bottles with specially shaped nozzles for nasal use. Currently we recommend NeilMed Sinus Rinse. Ask your doctor or nurse for further details.

## **What if I have also been prescribed nasal drops or sprays?**

Continue to use them as normal but always apply them after douching.

**Should you have any further queries, please feel free to contact us using the details at the end of this leaflet.**

Your nurse today was:

.....

Your doctor today was:

.....

Your consultant is:

.....



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit [www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm](http://www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm)

---

### **Ear, Nose & Throat Outpatient Department**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham  
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston  
Birmingham, B15 2GW  
Telephone: 0121 371 5527

**ENT Ward (408): 0121 371 4056**  
**Mr Ahmed's Secretary: 0121 371 4699**

---



**Delivering the best in care**

**UHB is a no smoking Trust**

To see all of our current patient information leaflets please visit [www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm](http://www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm)

## What is nasal douching?

Nasal douching is the process of washing out the nose with salty water.

## Reasons for douching

The nose acts as a filter and humidifier for the 14,000 litres of air we breathe each day.

Inflammation of the nasal membranes caused by sinus disease, allergies or irritants (such as cigarette smoke, perfumes or noxious chemicals) leads to excessive mucus production.

Washing this excess mucus away along with any irritants or allergens helps to reduce the amount of inflammation in the nasal passages and relieve symptoms.

## Douching after surgery

Following nasal surgery, your doctor may ask you to rinse your nose regularly to keep your sinuses clean. Douching will help wash away clots and crusting, promote good nasal hygiene and reduce the risk of infection.

Generally it will take a few weeks for the lining of your nose to settle following surgery and feelings of congestion may persist for some time. Carrying out regular nasal douching once you return home will aid recovery and provide symptomatic relief during the healing process.

## For nasal symptoms in Vasculitis

Regular nasal douching will help wash away clots and crusting and help to relieve feelings of congestion. Using a moisturising gel such as NeilMed Nasogel can also help to reduce crusting and discomfort. Ask your doctor or nurse for more details.

## Recipe for douching

Prepare:

- 1 pint of water – boiled and allowed to cool to body temperature

Then add (until dissolved):

- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda

## Directions for douching

1. Prepare the solution as described above
2. Standing over a bowl or sink, pour some of the solution into the palm of your cupped hand
3. Gently sniff the solution from the palm of your hand into one nostril
4. Repeat at least 3 times in each nostril until your nose feels comfortable

- You may, if you wish, gargle with the remaining solution to help clear any residual mucus from the back of your throat
- Try not to swallow any of the mixture, always spit out as much as you can
- Discard any leftover solution – it is recommended that you prepare fresh solution each time you douche

If you have been given a Neilmed Sinus Rinse bottle you may use this douching solution recipe when the sample sachets run out.

## Common questions and further advice

### Can I just use plain tap water?

It is advised you douche only using solution made from the recipe provided or approved ready made sachets. Douching with water alone can result in painful stinging sensations.

### When should I douche?

When it is most convenient for you. However, if this is before you go to bed, it is recommended you douche at least an hour beforehand to allow time for full nasal drainage to occur.

### How often should I douche?

Ideally at least twice a day – but you may douche as many times as required to obtain comfortable relief.