**Nasal Saline**

The nose warms, filters and humidifies air. It provides the first line of defense against infection. Using nasal saline regularly can help allergies, chronic or recurrent sinusitis, nose bleeds and post-nasal drip. Saline can help to:

- Remove crusts, secretions and pollen
- Shrink mucous membranes which improves sinus ventilation and drainage
- Move mucous out of the nasal and sinus cavities
- Keep the nasal passages moist

Nasal saline is inexpensive, has almost no long-term side effects and can be purchased over the counter. It can be used as a preventative medicine just as regular tooth brushing helps to prevent cavities. Use these and other medicines only if recommend by your health care provider. Check with your healthcare provider first before giving any type of medicine to your child.

**Can I use saline with other nasal medicines?**

Nasal steroid sprays such as Flonase and Nasacort, which you can buy over the counter, and Rhinocort (called “Budesonide”) can cause drying of the nose. Nasal saline can help with the drying. It is best to use nasal saline prior to using a nasal steroid.

Regular use of nasal saline can also reduce the need for decongestants, such as Afrin or Dristan. These decongestant nasal sprays should not be used for more than 3 days or they can cause more problems.

AYR Nasal Saline Mist and Little Noses Saline spray or drops work well for more sensitive noses.

**What are antibiotic saline solutions?**

Mixing an antibiotic with saline makes a solution that kills bacteria in the nose and sinuses. By using this solution, your child won’t have side effects like diarrhea, which can happen with oral antibiotics. The antibiotic ointment Bactroban (generic name “Mupirocin”) is often used to make a solution with saline. It is safe when applied inside the nose and does not sting or taste bad.

**How do I make an antibiotic saline solution?**

You will need to get a prescription for Bactroban (mupirocin) from your child’s doctor. It is sold in 22-gram tubes. You will also need some saline.

**To make the solution:**

1. Remove the nozzle of the saline bottle. Ocean and generic Kroger brands have nozzles that you can remove.
2. Squeeze ¼ of the tube of Bactroban (Mupirocin) into the 45 ml bottle of Ocean saline. Different brands of saline vary slightly in size (between 45 and 60 ml). Both sizes work well.
To Learn More
- Otolaryngology 206-987-2105
- Your child’s healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services
- In the hospital, ask your child’s nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Nasal Saline

3. Use a Q-tip to help push the Bactroban into the saline bottle.
4. You may need to pour out a small amount of saline to make room for the ointment. Replace the nozzle and shake the solution.

To use the solution:
- Shake before each use.
- The most sensitive part of the nose is the center part (septum). Teach your child to aim nose sprays away from the center.
- Aim up and out away from the nostril on an imaginary line toward the back of the eyeball.
- Use the nasal saline with Bactroban 1 to 2 times per day. Put 1 or 2 squirts into each nostril. Use the spray before using any allergy spray like Fluticasone and Budesonide.
- Bactroban and saline may have a slightly bitter aftertaste. Give your child juice to drink after giving the spray to help with this.

Nose Bleeds

More than 90% of nose bleeds in children come from the center part of the nose. Allergies make blood vessels more fragile in that area. Also children may injure those blood vessels by rubbing their nose when it itches. Therefore, treating nasal allergies is key to control recurring nose bleeds.

How can nose bleeds be treated?

The treatment for recurring nose bleeds is to reduce inflammation and prevent drying and irritation to the end of the septum.

To treat a nosebleed:
1. Use a steroid ointment (not cream), such as Cortaid (½% or 1% hydrocortisone), or a topical antibiotic ointment like Bactroban or a moisturizing ointment like Aquaphor or Vaseline.
2. Put a small amount on a Q-tip and apply the ointment to the end of the septum on both sides.
3. Gently pinch your child’s nose together to help place the ointment.
4. Do this at bedtime and in the morning.
If your child’s nose bleeds continue or get worse, notify your doctor.