
Comparison of Nasal Irrigation Methods and Devices

Whilst searching for information about nasal ailments, nasal research and recommended treatments we have come across many different nasal cleansing methods. People use the terms nasal irrigation, nasal wash out, nasal lavage, nasal rinse, nasal douche, nasal cleansing in many different contexts and often to mean vastly different things. We have tracked down and listed here some of these other methods and devices for you to compare with the complete and proper yoga technique as described on this website.

Most distributors of the following devices give only brief instructions about how to irrigate the nose. There are lots of people suggesting simplistic methods of nasal cleansing and many of these advocate sniffing the water. We call this sniffing method "Stage 2" and is best done after some time of accustomisation with Stage 1 which is much easier for beginners.

In many instances, the salt mixture is not described accurately enough so as not to cause discomfort, in fact some of them say that you SHOULD feel discomfort! This is not necessary if mixed correctly. Some suggest doubling the salinity and adding baking soda to neutralise the sting it would cause. This is not necessary either.

Rarely is there advice on drying the nose properly. Some leave out mention of it at all and some say to blow forcefully, shaking the head upside down! That's no good for those with high blood pressure and will pop the ears sending water where it should not go, causing headaches.

Rarely is there advice about the contraindications (nasal conditions which require qualified guidance); rarely is there troubleshooting advice or any after sales service offered. They make it seem so easy, that you will have no problems and everything will be fixed up by their product. But we have found over the years (well over 2000 years accumulated yoga knowledge about this practice) that about 30% of new users will have some bother with it initially - not because the technique is difficult but because many people these days have problematic nasal pathology. This website aims to educate people fully about the technique so that it might one day "sweep the world" - but with truthfulness and bestowing its proper benefits. Caveat Emptor - Trust only those who really know!

Grossan Nasal Tip with Water Pic

A US ENT specialist has designed a small plastic cone and tube which pulses water into the nose from

a Water Pic* (*Reg TM) electric pressurised toothbrush. Saline water is mixed in a reservoir container and fed into the Water Pic to flow through the nostrils at the minimum pressure.

Advantages: Has many favourable scientific and testimonial reports as to its efficacy. Allows unlimited supply of water once mixed. Shown to be a most efficient way to deeply cleanse the nasal cavities.

Disadvantages: High equipment outlay cost (US\$100). Needs access to electrical power or batteries.

Mechanical device with lots of bits and pieces to clean. Set up, usage and cleaning may take some time.

Saline Nasal Sprays

Quite popular small plastic squeeze bottles with catchy names commercially available most places. Contain about 50 mls of salty water with a pinch of baking soda (about 1 cent's worth of ingredients) in fancy packaging with unreputed claims of benefits. The user gives several squirts of saline mist up each nostril several times a day when needed.

Disadvantages: Research shows saline nasal sprays don't work at all in relieving symptoms of rhinosinusitis or the common cold. ([Link to research showing this.](#))

Advantages: None really, if they don't work - eh?

The Bowl and Hand Sniffing Method

Old fashioned method where cold or warm water is mixed with salt in a bowl, scooped into one cupped hand and sniffed up nose. No mention is ever made of drying the nose properly.

Advantages: Free. No equipment needed. Many people try this and they say it works on preventing and shortening colds.

Disadvantages: Inaccurate measurement likely. Uncomfortable if water is not correct temperature or salinity. Messy. Sniffing ensures water is sent to back of throat when unwanted. Poorly drying out the nasal passages can lead to worsening of colds and spread of bacteria.

The Cup Sniffing Method

Similar to above except a cupful of salted water is drunk through the nose.

Advantages: No cost if you have a cup on hand.

Disadvantages: Uncomfortable if water is not correct temperature or salinity. Messy. Sniffing ensures water is sent to back of throat when unwanted. Poorly drying out the nasal passages can lead to worsening of colds and spread of bacteria.

The Syringe Method

A plastic syringe with a rubber bulb at one end is a method used by ENT specialists and GP's to flush out nasal passages usually after nasal surgery. Recommended by doctors for patients to use at home

Advantages: None we can think of.

Disadvantages: May be painful when administered by other people. Does not allow control of water out the opposite nostril if nostrils are blocked. Very small capacity requiring multiple refills in each session. Syringes are spooky medical things most people are afraid of.

The Plastic Tomato Sauce (Ketchup) Bottle

Advantages: Very cheap. Available anywhere.

Disadvantages: Plastic gives off strange odour. Small size - less than 300 mls. Has to be modified with the nozzle cut to suit nostril size and air bleed hole pierced in bottom to allow water to flow out the nozzle. A hassle to fill up.

Length of Garden Hose (Yep - Seriously folks!)

Some people are pretty ingenious about saving money. We came upon this one in a hippie commune.

About 1 metre of garden hose is syphon filled with the salty water from a bowl, one end placed at nostril opening, other end raised into the air to create gravity flow (definitely not plumbed into the

tap on the wall !!!)

Advantages: Not worth commenting on.

Disadvantages: Not worth commenting on.

A Glass Boujee

An old fashioned nasal douching pot, from early this century made of glass, previously sold by chemist shops, pharmacies, drug stores.

Advantages: None we can think of.

Disadvantages: Fragile glass. Expensive (US\$50 +p&p) . Hard to find.

Ceramic Neti Pots

Advantages: Comparably cheap to buy (US\$15 - 25). Have aesthetic qualities. Often made by loving, backyard potters.

Disadvantages: Can be very heavy when full of water if large sized or else hold very little water if smaller. Can be easily broken or chipped accidentally. May have small pores into which dirt and bacteria may lodge. Not really suited to medical or industrial applications. Fragile in transit - cannot be mailed reliably.

Plastic Neti Pots

Becoming quite popular, "dishwasher safe" plastic Neti Pots imitating the traditional clay ones, are now sold under proprietary names with little sachets of "special" salt and Baking soda to mix in.

Advantages: Cheap to buy (US\$20). Easily obtainable. Hygienic.

Disadvantages: Usually very small - (less than 300 mls) giving insufficient wash out quantity without refilling several times. May crack or break if dropped. Short life span due to plastic deterioration in salty water.

Copper Neti Pots

Used by some yoga schools in the same way as we advocate Jala Neti - gravity flow through nostrils only. Most commonly made in India.

Advantages: None we can think of.

Disadvantages: Known to tarnish and corrode in the presence of salt water. Electrolysis results in copper and sodium residues in the water and up your nose. Difficult to keep clean. Usually soft soldered spouts - therefore easily prone to breakage.

Stainless Steel Neti Pots

Advantages: Strong. Hygienic. Last a lifetime. Suited to industrial and medical usage. Can be mailed anywhere safely. Non spill half lid.

Disadvantages: Can be costly, BUT - they'll last a lifetime.