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## Saline Irrigation Eases Chronic Nasal Symptoms

Salt water rinse of the airway beats saline sprays at providing relief, study finds

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HealthDay

Robert Preidt

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FRIDAY, Nov. 23 (HealthDay News) -- Saline irrigation is a safe, inexpensive and effective method for treating chronic nasal and sinus symptoms, according to a new study.

Researchers at the University of Michigan Health System also concluded that saline irrigation -- the flushing of nasal passages with a salt water mixture -- is more effective than commonly used saline sprays at providing short-term relief of chronic nasal symptoms.

The study included 121 adults with chronic nasal and sinus symptoms. Sixty were treated for eight weeks with saline irrigation, and 61 were treated with saline spray.

The patients in the saline irrigation group showed greater improvement at two, four and eight weeks.

After completion of the study, 61 percent of patients in the spray group reported having symptoms "often or always," compared with 40 percent of patients in the irrigation group.

"The irrigation group achieved a clinically significant improvement in quality of life in terms of severity of their symptoms, whereas the spray group did not. Strikingly, (the irrigation group) also experienced 50 percent lower odds of frequent nasal symptoms compared with the spray group," lead author Dr. Melissa A. Pynnonen, clinical assistant professor in the department of otolaryngology, said in a prepared statement.

The study, published in the current issue of the journal *Archives of Otolaryngology -- Head & Neck Surgery*, received funding from NeilMed Pharmaceuticals, which makes a saline sinus rinse.

Tens of millions of Americans suffer from chronic nasal and sinus conditions. Treatments include antibiotics, antihistamines and anti-inflammatory drugs. The findings of this study suggest that doctors should recommend saline irrigation more often for patients with chronic sinus and nasal conditions, Pynnonen and her colleagues said.

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