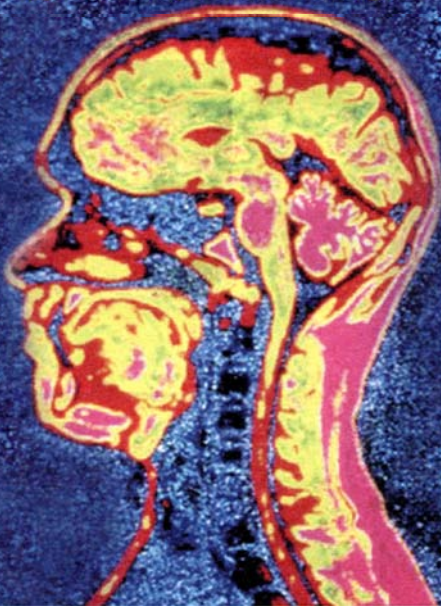


HERE'S A SIMPLE SOLUTION THAT PUTS AN END TO SINUS HEADACHE

Salted water also helps treat flu, colds and allergies



A mixture of water, salt and baking soda is perfect for rinsing.



ARE you one of the 32 million Americans each year, who suffer from pounding sinus headaches and chronic sinusitis?

Simply rinsing your nose once or twice a day with salt water could be the solution to your health problems.

Plain old salt water can cut down on your need for decongestants, antihistamines and allergy medications, according to experts.

But the best part is that it works great for kids, grown-ups and the elderly — and it's safe.

"Saline solutions prevent nasal congestion, sinusitis, and allergic reactions — plus they act therapeutically to reduce the symptoms of such problems," said Dr. Jay Piccirillo, an ear, nose and throat specialist, who teaches at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Adds Dr. Hana Solomon, a Missouri-based pediatrician: "The nose is the body's filter.

"It protects us from disease. It only makes sense to wash the nose, just as we wash our hands and brush our teeth."

Sinus congestion results when membranes in the nose become inflamed from irritants in the air and produce more mucus.

Nasal passages swell, trapping bacteria and viruses in the sinuses. As the germs spread, a sinus infection can result.

But flushing the sinuses with salt water daily washes away irritants, particles and debris. Similarly, salt

water also washes away pet dander, mold and pollen that can cause allergic reactions.

There are essentially no adverse reactions from rinsing your nose with a clean saline solution.

Piccirillo tells The

ENQUIRER that there are many different types of saline preparations and devices on the market. These products range from a simple spray to a Waterpik irrigator with a special nasal adapter.

Solomon is marketing

her own saline product, Nasopure, on her Web site, www.nasopure.com. It retails for about \$15 per bottle.

You can also buy Ayr-Saline Nasal Mist 1.69 fl oz (50 ml) in most drugstores and on-line.

But homemade water-and-salt preparations can also be effective, said Piccirillo.

Using a clean bowl, mix 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon baking soda in 8 ounces of warm water.

Fill a bulb syringe, spray bottle or similar device with lukewarm salt water and squirt in each nostril with your head back. Do it once in the morning and again at night.

You can store the original solution for two days if it's refrigerated. But clean the syringe after each use. Never dip a dirty syringe in the original solution because this can contaminate it. Never share sprayers or syringes because this can spread germs.

Directions for older children (who can blow nose): Squirt 3 drops in each nostril while lying down. Wait 1 minute, while mucus softens, then tell child to blow nose.

Follow the same steps for younger children, but suction out mucus with a pediatric bulb syringe.

- FRANKLIN RUEHL