

Nurse's Notes

Health news compiled by the Parish Health Ministry
of Immaculate Conception/St. Joseph Parish, New Lebanon, NY

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The contact number for our local Catholic Charities representative is 925-0682.

Before you have a medical test, ask your doctor these questions.

- Why do I need the test? What will it show about my health?
- What will it cost and will my insurance cover it?
- What do I need to do to prepare for the test? (For example, you may need to have an empty stomach, or you may have to provide a urine sample.)
- What steps does the medical test involve?
- Are there any dangers or side effects?
- How will I find out the results of my test? How long will it take to get the results?
- What will we know after the test?

In this issue:

- Having a medical test?
- Neti pots
- Sledding safety
- Financial health tip 

When the results are ready, make sure the doctor tells you what they are and explains what they mean. You may want to ask your doctor for a written copy of the test results. If the test is done by a specialist, ask to have the results sent to your primary doctor. (taken from <https://nihseniorhealth.gov/talkingwithyourdoctor/faq/faq17.html>)

Is Rinsing Your Sinuses With Neti Pots Safe?

Little teapots with long spouts have become a fixture in many homes to flush out clogged nasal passages and help people breathe easier. Along with other nasal irrigation systems, these devices — commonly called neti pots — use a saline, or saltwater, solution to treat congested sinuses, colds and allergies. They're also used to moisten nasal passages exposed to dry indoor air. But be careful. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), improper use of these neti pots and other nasal rinsing devices can increase your risk of infection.

These nasal rinse devices — which include bulb syringes, squeeze bottles, and battery-operated pulsed water devices — are usually safe and effective products when used and cleaned properly, says Eric A. Mann, MD, PhD, a doctor at FDA. What does safe use mean? First, rinse only with distilled, sterile or previously boiled water.

Tap water isn't safe for use as a nasal rinse because it's not adequately filtered or treated. Some tap water contains low levels of organisms — such as bacteria and protozoa, including amoebas — that may be safe to swallow because stomach acid kills them. But in your nose, these organisms can stay alive in nasal passages and cause potentially serious infections. They can even be fatal in some rare cases, [according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

What Types of Water Are Safe to Use?

- Distilled or sterile water, which you can buy in stores. The label will state “distilled” or “sterile.”
- Boiled and cooled tap water — boiled for 3 to 5 minutes, then cooled until it is lukewarm. Previously boiled water can be stored in a clean, closed container for use within 24 hours.
- Water passed through a filter designed to trap potentially infectious organisms. [CDC has information on selecting these filters.](#)

Safely Use Nasal Irrigation Systems- Second, make sure you follow instructions.

“There are various ways to deliver saline to the nose. Nasal spray bottles deliver a fine mist and might be useful for moisturizing dry nasal passages. But irrigation devices are better at flushing the nose and clearing out mucus, allergens and bacteria,” Mann says. Information included with the irrigation device might give more specific instructions about its use and care. These devices all work in basically the same way:

- Leaning over a sink, tilt your head sideways with your forehead and chin roughly level to avoid liquid flowing into your mouth.
- Breathing through your open mouth, insert the spout of the saline-filled container into your upper nostril so that the liquid drains through the lower nostril.

- Clear your nostrils. Then repeat the procedure, tilting your head sideways, on the other side.

Sinus rinsing can remove dust, pollen and other debris, as well as help to loosen thick mucus. It can also help relieve nasal symptoms of sinus infections, allergies, colds and flu. Plain water can irritate your nose. The saline allows the water to pass through delicate nasal membranes with little or no burning or irritation. And if your immune system isn't working properly, consult your health care provider before using any nasal irrigation systems.

To use and care for your device:

- Wash and dry your hands.
- Check that the device is clean and completely dry.
- Prepare the saline rinse, either with the prepared mixture supplied with the device, or one you make yourself.
- Follow the manufacturer's directions for use.
- Wash the device, and dry the inside with a paper towel or let it air dry between uses.

Talk with a health care provider or pharmacist if the instructions on your device do not clearly state how to use it or if you have any questions. (Ed. Note: for information on children's use, see article at <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/-MAL>)

Head for the Hills With Sled Safety in Mind-Kids at higher risk for head and neck injuries while sledding... by Mary Elizabeth Dallas

FRIDAY, Jan. 13, 2017 (HealthDay News) -- When temperatures drop and snow falls, children are ready to reach for their hats, scarves -- and sleds. Sledding and snow tubing are among the fun winter activities that families can enjoy together. But, there are steps parents should take to ensure their kids remain injury-free, the National Safety Council cautions.

Children can get hurt if their sled hits a stationary object, such as a rock or a tree. Falling off a sled can also result in injuries, including bruises, cuts and broken bones. Children younger than 6 years old are at particularly high risk for head and neck injuries, the council warned.

When choosing sleds, pick those that can be steered. These models are safer than flat sheets, snow discs and toboggans that don't provide kids with control over their direction, the council said. Parents should make sure their children are dressed warmly before they head out into the snow. While sledding, kids should not only wear gloves and boots but also a helmet to help prevent head injuries. Children shouldn't sled alone. An adult should always be present to supervise and help when necessary, the council advised.

Parents should also teach kids about sledding safety. The council provided the following tips:

- Only sled in areas that are clear of trees and other obstacles, such as fences, light poles and rocks.
- Teach children how to stop and turn their sled with their feet.
- Don't overload a sled. Only the recommended number of passengers should ride at one time.
- Never sled in the street.
- Never ride a sled that's being pulled by a car, ATV, snowmobile or other motorized vehicle.
- Avoid sledding on hills that drop off into a street, parking lot or body of water.
- Tubes are safest when used at tubing parks, often found at ski resorts. SOURCE: National Safety Council

Financial health tip: when preparing your tax returns, be aware that donations to the church such as those for Mass intentions and/or altar flowers are deductible items. Because the parish office cannot keep the records of the Mass intention offerings, make sure to keep your own records-use checks, not cash, and note the reason for the donation on

the check. If you are in doubt, ask your tax preparer. (Mal)