Suctioning the Nose with a Bulb Syringe

Suctioning mucus out of your baby's nose makes it easier for him or her to breathe and to eat. Suction your baby before feeding. Cleaning out the baby's nose before feeding will help him to suck and eat more easily.

You Will Need

- Bulb syringe
- Soft Tissues
- Saline or prescribed respiratory nose drops
- A soft blanket (rolled up) - optional

How to Suction

1. To use the bulb syringe, squeeze the air out of the bulb. Keep the bulb squeezed.

2. Gently place the tip of the squeezed bulb into a nostril.

3. Release the bulb to let the air back into the bulb. This will pull the mucus out of the nose and into the bulb.

4. Squeeze the mucus out of the bulb and onto a tissue.

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5. Suction the other nostril the same way.
6. If mucus is too thick to suction, thin it with saline or prescribed respiratory drops if needed (see instructions below).
7. Gently wipe off the mucus around the baby's nose with tissues to prevent irritation.
8. Limit suctioning to no more than four times each day to avoid irritating the nose.

After Suctioning

Wash the bulb syringe in warm, soapy water after each use. Squeeze soapy water into the bulb and shake to clean out the mucus. Then squeeze the water out. Repeat this step many times. Rinse several times by filling with clear water, then squeezing the water out.

Saline Nose Drops

Saline nose drops can be bought over-the-counter or made at home.

To make the saline nose drops, you will need:

- 1 cup warm water
- Table salt
- Clean jar with cover
- Kitchen measuring spoon
- Nose dropper

1. Fill a jar with 1 cup warm (not hot) tap water.
2. Add 1/4 teaspoon salt. Stir to dissolve.
3. Make new solution each time. Throw away unused solution. Wash the dropper and jar.

How to Put Nose Drops into the Child's Nose

1. Lay your baby on his back.
2. Put 3-4 drops into each nostril using the nose dropper.
   The nose drops may make the baby sneeze (Picture 1).
3. After giving the nose drops, hold your baby with his head back for about a minute. This will give the saline time to thin the mucus. Then, suction with the bulb syringe as shown on Page 1.
4. Do not use any other type of medicine nose drops unless prescribed by the doctor.

Caution: Remember to use saline drops and perform suctioning before feeding. The combination of saline and suctioning may cause vomiting. Suctioning will also make it easier for your child to breathe during his feeding.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child’s doctor or nurse.