

# Simple Spray Cures Kids' Colds

A nasal spray made from Atlantic Ocean seawater eased children's cold symptoms, and slowed their return, according to European researchers. The 12-week study involved nearly 400 children between the ages of 6 and 10 who had uncomplicated cold or flu symptoms. Some children received nasal decongestants or other standard treatments, while others received a saline nasal wash that had ions and trace elements at levels comparable with those in seawater.

Children who were given the nasal spray had less stuffy and runny noses, along with fewer severe sore throats, coughs, nasal obstructions and secretions, than those given standard treatments. Further, those who used the nasal spray missed fewer school days, were sick less often and used fewer fever-reducing drugs, decongestants and antibiotics.

The researchers are not sure why the saline solution was effective, but suggested it could be due to a mechanical clearing of mucus, or could have something to do with the trace elements in the water. Saline nasal washes have long been used as a treatment for colds, but evidence supporting their effectiveness is scarce.

Sources:

Reuters January 21, 2008

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One of the main components in seawater, of course, is salt, and salt – in its natural form -- has many therapeutic properties when inhaled or used as a soak. Not only are brine baths, which you can make at home by adding a large amount (about 2.6 pounds of salt for a 27-32 gallon tub) of natural, high-quality salt to your bathwater, a great way to revitalize your body, but salt rooms are also growing in popularity.

These rooms, which are essentially small rooms covered in salt, originated in Eastern Europe but have made their way to the United States, including to my hometown of Chicago. Visitors sit in the room for a half hour or an hour to simply breathe in the salty air. And anecdotal reports say they're beneficial for everything from asthma to respiratory infections to stress.

I suspect, however, that the nasal spray used in this study was so effective not only because of the natural salt but also because of the many beneficial properties of seawater. Immersing your body in natural saltwater actually serves to kill many of the parasites that live on your skin and in your nasal passages and eyes. This takes a major stress off your immune system. Additionally, you will absorb many valuable minerals right from the water.

If you don't live near an ocean, and you or your child has a cold or nasal problem, a nasal wash using a few grains of crystal salt in 1/4 cup of warm water may help.

