



## Pediatric Surgical Associates, Ltd.

### Rectal Irrigations

#### What is rectal irrigation?

Rectal irrigation, also known as colonic irrigation, is a procedure that can help children with Hirschsprung's Disease empty their colon and relieve constipation. It involves flushing the child's bowel with saline solution through the rectum to remove stool and toxins. This can help prevent a serious infection called enterocolitis.

#### Why does my child need rectal irrigations?

Commonly, children born with Hirschsprung's Disease or other anorectal malformations have colons that do not move stool through the body as quickly as it should. When stool sits in the bowel too long, it can lead to bacterial overgrowth which can lead to enterocolitis or inflammation of the colon. They may need daily irrigations to help clear the stool out and prevent infection.

#### How often does my child need irrigations?

Rectal irrigations will need to be done \_\_\_\_\_ times a day for \_\_\_\_\_ days, or until your doctor tells you to discontinue.

#### How much saline should I use for each irrigation?

You should use \_\_\_\_\_ mL for each irrigation

#### Supplies Needed:

- Silicone or red rubber catheter
- 60 ml catheter-tip syringe
- Water soluble lubricant (not oil based)
- Saline solution- **NEVER USE PLAIN WATER FOR RECTAL IRRIGATIONS. THIS CAN CAUSE YOUR CHILD TO HAVE FURTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS**
- 2 non-sterile basins

#### Steps for Irrigation:

1. Pour saline into one of the basins
2. Using the 60 ml catheter-tip syringe, draw up appropriate amount of saline as directed by your doctor
3. Place your child on their back with their knees pulled up to their chest. You may need another adult to help.



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4. Place a clean towel or chux pads underneath your child's bottom.
5. Spread the lubricant on the catheter and gently insert it into your child's rectum, place the other end of catheter into extra basin to allow to drain. Hold the catheter in place so it does not fall out.
  - a. For babies less that 28 days old, insert catheter about 1 ½ inches
  - b. For 28 days to 1 year old, insert about 3 inches
  - c. For over 1 year old, insert about 4-6 inches
6. Attach the syringe to the end of the catheter and slowly push saline solution through the catheter into your child's rectum. Do not force the solution, it should flow in easily.
7. Disconnect the syringe from the end of the catheter and allow solution to drain into empty basin.
8. Repeat this process until total amount of saline has been instilled.

**NOTE:** It is important to observe the amount of volume between instillations drained from the catheter into basin; you should have the same amount of instilled saline plus stool in the basin.

If you are not getting any stool back with the irrigation, check the catheter for obstruction (thick stool can cause this to happen), massage child's belly or have them change positions

**NOTE:** You may also make saline at home by mixing 1 gallon of **distilled** water with 8 teaspoons of table salt.