

SITZ BATH GUIDE FOR PATIENTS

Important Tips

- **Temperature check**
Always be sure the water temperature is comfortable for you. It should be warm, not hot.
- **Consult your healthcare provider**
Before starting sitz baths, especially after surgery or radiation therapy, check with your healthcare provider. They can provide personalized advice and precautions.
- **Gentle drying**
After your bath, gently pat the area dry with a clean, soft towel. Avoid rubbing, to prevent irritation.
- **Monitor your skin**
Pay attention to how your skin responds to the sitz bath. If you notice increased irritation or discomfort, consult your healthcare provider.

Remember, sitz baths are a supportive treatment designed to enhance your comfort and healing. If you have any concerns or experience adverse effects, reach out to your healthcare team for guidance.

What is a sitz bath?

A sitz bath is a therapeutic warm soak focusing on the lower part of your body, including the vaginal, scrotal, anal and perineal areas. It involves sitting in warm water to which Epsom salt or baking soda has been added.

Why should I take a sitz bath?

Sitz baths are particularly beneficial if you've had surgery or radiation therapy treatments affecting your lower body. This simple practice can clean and calm irritated or sore skin, boost blood flow to the area, enhance comfort and support the healing process.

How to take a sitz bath

Follow the package instructions for mixing Epsom salt. Typically, for every quart (4 cups) of water, mix in about 10 mL (2 level teaspoons) of salt or baking soda. The ideal water temperature is between 104–109°F (40–43°C), which is warm enough to be soothing, but not so hot as to cause discomfort.

You have two options for taking a sitz bath:

- **In your bathtub:** Fill your bathtub with enough warm salt water to cover the affected areas.
- **Using a sitz bath basin:** Purchase a plastic sitz bath basin from a pharmacy, which can be placed on your toilet seat. Fill this basin with warm salt water.

Additives to create your sitz bath

- **Epsom salt:** If available, adding Epsom salt to your sitz bath can further help reduce soreness and inflammation. Use the recommended amount on the package for one quart of water.
- **Baking soda:** As an alternative, you can use baking soda if Epsom salts are not available. Add 2–4 tablespoons to the bathwater to help soothe and cleanse the area.

Soaking time: Relax in your sitz bath for 10–15 minutes. After soaking, carefully pat dry the area with a soft towel or allow it to air dry.

How often should I take a sitz bath?

You can safely enjoy a sitz bath up to four times daily, especially after bowel movements, to maximize relief and promote healing.