Colostomy Irrigation: Step By Step Guide

What you will need
- Colostomy Irrigation Kit - 903314
- Irrigation sleeve
- Pole or hook
- 500 mL water (lukewarm)
- Belt (optional)
- Water soluble lubricant (example, KY jelly)
- Clean pouch

Procedure (This will take about 1 hour)
1. Wash your hands. Slide clamp close to cone and close clamp on irrigation bag tubing.
2. Fill irrigation bag with 500 mL lukewarm water for first few irrigations (May increase water volume up to 1000 mL over time as needed)
3. Hang irrigation bag at shoulder level. Run water through the tubing to get the air out.
4. Sit on a chair next to the toilet or on the toilet, whichever is more comfortable.
5. Remove colostomy pouch. Remove clamp (if using one). Dispose of pouch. Carefully wipe the stoma clean with toilet paper.
6. Snap the irrigation sleeve on and apply a clip to the bottom of the sleeve.
7. Lubricate the tip of the cone with lubricant.
8. Through the top of the sleeve, insert the cone into the center of the stoma. Press cone firmly but gently into the stoma. Slowly open the clamp, allowing the water to flow into the stoma, without leaking around it. Adjust the direction of the cone. Replace if needed for better flow within 5-10 minutes. Relax as the water flows in.
9. If you become uncomfortable, stop the water briefly by clamping the tubing. Do not remove the cone. When the discomfort stops, resume the flow of water.
10. When the water has gone in, wait a minute or two and gently remove the cone to prevent splash.
   - Wait 5-10 minutes to allow most of the water to flow from your colostomy into the sleeve.
   - Empty sleeve from the bottom
   - Wipe edge of sleeve clean and replace the clamp.
   - Allow 30-45 more minutes for the rest of the water and stool to return. You may walk around or do small tasks while the colon is emptying. When finished, empty sleeve into the toilet.

OVER
11. Emptying
   - Empty sleeve into the toilet from the bottom.
   - Wipe edge of sleeve clean. Return the clamp.

12. Remove sleeve carefully
   - Wipe stoma clean (taking care not to soil the wafer with stool)
   - Apply clean pouch

13. Rinse
   - Rinse sleeve out well then wash sleeve with cool, soapy water. Drain into toilet. (Warm water will cause the sleeve to smell)
   - Rinse again. Drain into toilet.
   - Dry with paper towel. Place dry paper towel inside the sleeve to allow it to dry. Store in safe, clean place.

14. Drain irrigator bag and tubing of water and store with clamp open to allow it to dry.

15. Wash your hands.

Questions Some People Ask

How often should I irrigate?
Most people irrigate their colostomy every day or every other day. Your past bowel habits are a good guide.

What time should I irrigate?
It is best to irrigate about the same time every day. You can choose the time of day that works best with your schedule.

Can I use tap water for my irrigation?
Most tap water is fine to use. If the water is safe to drink, it is generally safe for your colostomy irrigation.

How fast should the water flow into my stoma?
That will depend on how much water you use. If you use 1000 mL (one quart) of water, it will take about 10 minutes. If the water stops flowing you may need to change to position of the cone.

What does it mean if I have cramps during the irrigation?
Cramps could happen if the water flows in too quickly. You can clamp the tubing to stop the slow of the water. Leave the cone in our stoma and see if the cramps stop. Water that is too cold may cause cramping. Removing the stoma cone and allowing the bowel to empty should relieve cramps completely. If cramping is severe or persists, call your doctor.