

Nasal Allergy Medications

Medications

- Medications such as antihistamines and decongestants act quickly but are often not sufficient treatment for nasal allergies.
- Medications are not a substitute for avoidance measures. If you can stay away from what you are allergic to, you won't need to take as many medications.
- Most nasal allergy medications are available over the counter. You can discuss them with your pharmacist, family doctor, or allergist.

Preventative nasal sprays

- Often, the best treatment for nasal symptoms is to use preventative nasal spray medications regularly.
- Most of these nasal sprays are steroids- however they do not have the same side effects as the muscle-building kind of steroids.
- Preventative nasal sprays do not provide quick relief of symptoms and must be used regularly.
- Preventative sprays take approximately one to two weeks to begin working. If symptoms haven't subsided after four weeks, you can stop taking them.
- If symptoms return after you stop taking the nasal spray, it probably means the nasal spray was helping after all, and you might want to try them again.

How to use prescription nasal sprays

1. First, blow your nose.
 2. The first time you use the spray you will have to pump it a few times to get it started. (You won't need to do this again, unless it hasn't been used for a long period of time.)
 3. Be careful to aim the spray nozzle up and back, within each nostril- aim a little bit away from the middle wall of the nose, or septum. Sometimes it is easier to achieve the right angle if you spray each nostril using the opposite hand.
 4. Try not to blow your nose for five to ten minutes
- If you experience nosebleeds, try putting a small amount of Vaseline on the nasal septum.
 - Nosebleeds can be reduced or eliminated by reducing the dose, or taking a break from using nasal sprays for a day or two each week (perhaps on weekends).
 - If nose bleeding persists, stop the medication and contact your doctor.
 - Once the medication starts to work, you can try lowering the dose to find the lowest dose that will work for you.
 - If you don't use the preventative nose sprays practically every day, they won't work as well.

Over the counter nose sprays

- Decongestant nose sprays or drops are available over the counter, without a prescription.
- These are only recommended for short periods of time (only a few days) as they can be habit-forming and may increase nasal irritation.

Antihistamines or decongestant tablets

- You may use antihistamines or decongestant tablets for extra relief on days when your symptoms are worse.
- If needed, you can take these medications with your regular nasal and asthma medications.