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Nasal sprays are commonly prescribed to treat inflammation in the nose and sinuses, often caused by allergies (rhinitis) or sinusitis. This leaflet explains how to use your nasal spray correctly to get the best results and minimize any side effects. Using your spray regularly, as prescribed by your doctor, is important for managing your symptoms.

### What Kind of Nasal Spray Do I Have?

Most nasal sprays for long-term use contain a corticosteroid medication. These help to reduce inflammation over time. Common examples include:

- Fluticasone propionate (e.g., Flixonase, Nasofan, Pirinase)
- Fluticasone furoate (e.g., Avamys)
- Mometasone furoate (e.g., Nasonex, Clarinaze)
- Dymista (contains fluticasone propionate and azelastine – an anti-histamine)
- Ryaltris (contains mometasone furoate and olopatadine hydrochloride - an anti-histamine)

*Important Note:* These are *different* from decongestant nasal sprays (like Otrivine or Sudafed). Decongestant sprays should only be used for a few days at a time, as longer use can worsen congestion.



### Are Nasal Steroid Sprays Safe?

Yes, nasal steroid sprays, particularly those containing fluticasone or mometasone, are generally very safe. They have very low absorption into the bloodstream, meaning they are unlikely to cause the side effects sometimes associated with steroid tablets or injections. They are often safe for children and during pregnancy (when necessary), but always discuss this with your doctor.

A very small number of medications may interact with nasal steroid sprays. It is important that you tell your prescribing doctor or pharmacist all medications that you take, including any over the counter or herbal remedies.

### Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. **Prepare:** Wash your hands thoroughly and gently blow your nose to clear it.
2. **Shake:** Gently shake the nasal spray bottle.
3. **Remove Cap:** Remove the protective cap from the spray nozzle.
4. **Prime (if needed):** If it's the first time you're using the bottle, or if you haven't used it in a while (check the manufacturer's instructions), you may need to "prime" the spray by pressing down a few times until a fine mist comes out.

5. **Position:** Keep your head upright. *Do not tilt your head back.*
6. **Insert:** Gently insert the nozzle tip into one nostril.
7. **Angle:** *Crucially, point the nozzle slightly away from the center of your nose (the septum).* Aim towards the outer corner of your eye on the same side. Using your right hand for your left nostril, and your left hand for your right nostril, can help with this.
8. **Spray and Breathe:** As you breathe in *gently* through your nose, press down firmly on the spray applicator to release one spray. *Do not sniff hard.*
9. **Repeat:** Repeat steps 6-8 for the other nostril.
10. **Clean:** After use, wipe the nozzle with a clean tissue.
11. **Replace Cap:** Replace the protective cap on the bottle.



### Getting the Most from Your Nasal Spray:

- **Consistency is Key:** Nasal steroid sprays work best when used regularly, as prescribed by your doctor. It may take a few weeks to feel the full benefit.
- **Don't Expect Immediate Relief:** These sprays are designed for long-term control, not immediate relief.
- **What to Expect:** Some people find their nose feels a little dry. This is usually not a problem.
- **Regular Review:** Your doctor will usually want to review your progress after 2-3 months of consistent use.

### Troubleshooting and Tips:

- **Nosebleeds or Soreness:** If you experience nosebleeds or soreness, double-check your technique, especially the angle of the spray. Make sure you're not aiming at the septum. If the problem persists, contact your doctor.
- **Unpleasant Taste:** If you get an unpleasant taste in your mouth, try drinking some water or a flavoured drink after using the spray.
- **Storage:** Store your nasal spray at room temperature, away from direct sunlight and heat. Check the label for specific storage instructions.
- **Disposal:** Do not share nasal sprays.

### When to Contact Your Doctor:

- If you experience persistent nosebleeds or soreness.
- If your symptoms don't improve after several weeks of regular use.
- If you have any concerns about using your nasal spray.
- If you are taking other medication, check with your prescribing doctor or pharmacist to ensure there are no interactions.