



How to use a nasal spray

Information for patients from the Allergy and Immunology Department

You have been prescribed nasal spray by your doctor. This leaflet gives a step-by-step guide of how to use the nasal spray.

We hope this leaflet answers some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

Before you use your nasal spray

- Always make sure your hands are clean before using the nasal spray.
- Always make sure the spray device is working and ready to use.
- Gently shake the bottle before use.
- The spray can be used either in the morning or evening, or both.



Shaking the bottle

Guide to using the nasal spray

Step 1

- Clear your nose, by gently blowing your nose.

This prepares the nasal area by removing mucus. If mucus is present, it will trap the spray and prevent it from reaching the nasal lining.



Step 1: Gently blow your nose

Step 2

- Bend your head forward, and bring your chin to your chest.

This position closes off the back of your throat. It allows the spray to reach the correct area inside your nose.



Step 2: Bend your head forward

Step 3

- Hold the spray in the opposite hand to the nostril in which you are about to apply the spray. For example, if you are going to spray your right nostril, hold the spray in your left hand.



Step 3: Hold the spray in your left hand, and spray your right nostril

This makes sure that you aim the spray, pointing it away from your septum. The septum is the middle part inside the nose, and has only a thin layer of membrane and can be easily damaged.

- How to hold and use the spray will depend on the device being used. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Step 4

- Place the tip of the spray bottle just inside your nostril. Aim away from the septum (middle part inside the nose), pointing the spray towards your ear or eye.
- Keep your other nostril open.

This will make sure the spray is aimed toward the fleshy turbinate's inside your nose.

Step 5

- Hold the bottle with your index and middle finger at the top, and your thumbs at the bottom.

- Activate the spray.
- Breathe in gently as you spray. **Do not sniff hard.**

Each spray will release a single dose of the medication. Sniffing hard causes the spray to travel past your nose and into your throat.

Step 6

- Change hands and repeat the above steps in your other nostril.
- Using the opposite hand makes sure the spray bottle continues to be angled away from your septum.

Step 7

- After spraying both nostrils, clean the nozzle and replace the cap.

Extra tips for nasal medications

- If you have an unpleasant taste after using the nasal spray, drinking water or a flavoured drink may help.
- If you develop soreness or bleeding, you may be using the medications incorrectly. Re-check the instructions. Make sure you are not pressing the container against your septum (middle part inside the nose). If the soreness and / or bleeding does not settle, speak to your GP.
- Do not use decongestant nasal sprays for more than 5 days in a row. This can make the congestion worse, by causing the lining of the nose to swell every time it is stopped.

References

- ENT UK. How to use nasal sprays: a step-by-step guide. (https://www.entuk.org/patients/conditions/79/how_to_use_nasal_sprays)
- British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI). Topical nasal corticosteroid spray. Standard Operating Procedure. March 2017. (<https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Howtouseanasalspray.pdf>)
- Primary Care Respiratory Society. Allergic Rhinitis: a common problem, not to be sneezed at! Primary Care Respiratory Update May 2025. (<https://www.pcrs-uk.org/resource/current/allergic-rhinitis-common-problem-not-be-sneezed>)



Step 5: Hold the bottle with your index and middle finger at the top, and your thumbs at the bottom



Step 7: Clean the nozzle

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We welcome feedback, whether positive or negative, as it helps us to improve our care and services.

If you would like to give us feedback about this leaflet, please fill in our short online survey. Either scan the QR code below, or use the web link. We do not record your personal information, unless you provide contact details and would like to talk to us some more.

Giving feedback about this leaflet



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDOBU4/>

If you would rather talk to someone instead of filling in a survey, please call the Patient Voice Team.

- **Patient Voice Team**

Telephone: 01227 868605

Email (ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net)

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- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

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