

Afrin (oxymetazoline) basics

Clears your sinuses. Afrin (oxymetazoline) clears stuffy noses, but can worsen your congestion if it is used more frequently than 3 days in a row.

What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.

	Hours	Days	Weeks	Months	Long term
Afrin (oxymetazoline) Drug effectiveness					
Possible side effects†	Hours	Days	Weeks	Months	Long term
Dry nose					
Burning or stinging inside the nose					
Sneezing					
Rebound nasal congestion					

† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

Tips from pharmacists

- Prime the inhaler when you first receive it by spraying it into the air 3-4 times until you see a full mist.
- Blow your nose and clear your nostrils before each dose.
- Keep your head upright and breathe in through the nose with quick and gentle sniffs while spraying. Wait about 15 minutes before clearing your nostrils.
- Don't use Afrin (oxymetazoline) for more than 3 days in a row because it can worsen your congestion.

Risks and warnings

Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

Rebound nasal congestion

Don't use it for more than 3 days in a row. Chronic use can lead to "rebound" congestion, which means your symptoms could get worse or come back after completing your treatment. If you're having stuffy nose for longer than 3 days, consider using a non-medicated nasal spray, like saline (salt-water). Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other ways to take care of your congestion.