This handout explains how saline nasal sprays work, side effects of nasal sprays, and how to use them. The word “nasal” means anything relating to the nose.

**How do saline nasal sprays work?**

Saline sprays add moisture to the nasal passages. When your nasal passages are dry, you can get mild nasal crusting. Bacterial infections can develop under these crusts. Saline sprays clean the crusts and mucus from your nasal passages and help the natural cleaning system of your nasal passages.

**What are the side effects of saline nasal sprays?**

Nasal sprays may sting slightly. Sometimes the preservative in the saline spray may cause mild irritation. If this occurs, use a preservative free saline spray, such as Simple Saline.

**How to use nasal sprays**

Follow these steps to use a nasal spray:

1. Blow your nose to get rid of mucus.
2. Remove the cap of the spray. The first time you use a spray you may have to squeeze the bottle a few times into the air until a mist comes out.
3. Tilt your head forward slightly and breathe out through your nose.
4. As you breathe in slowly through your nose, squeeze the bottle. It may be helpful to cover the nostril you are not spraying.
5. Try not to sneeze or blow your nose right after using the spray.

Use a nasal spray on each side of your nose 1-2 times at least 2-3 times daily, or as directed by your care team.