

Taking fentanyl nasal spray for pain

What is fentanyl nasal spray?

- Fentanyl is a strong morphine-like medicine
- Instanyl and PecFent are pre-packed nasal sprays which both contain fentanyl
- Fentanyl comes as a solution (liquid) to spray into the nose and is rapidly absorbed through the nasal mucosa that lines the nose.

Why do I / my child need to take fentanyl nasal spray?

Fentanyl is used to reduce moderate and severe rapid onset (breakthrough) pain.

Breakthrough pain is pain that breaks through suddenly on a background of controlled persistent pain

You / your child may also be taking another longer acting morphine like pain relief medicine for continuous pain (background pain).

When should fentanyl nasal spray be taken?

- For rapid onset of breakthrough pain
- Prior to an anticipated or known painful event or procedure such as wound care or pain on moving.

How do I use the spray?

Follow the manufacturer's instructions in their medication guide.

- Remove the cap from the child-resistant sealed blister container and remove the protective cap from the bottle tip when it is due to be used
- Blow your nose if it is runny or blocked
- Sit upright and insert the tip of the bottle approximately ½ inch (1cm) into one nostril, pointing the tip towards the bridge of the nose.
- Close your other nostril with a finger
- Press the plunger firmly upwards to release the dose (see picture) whilst inhaling gently through the nose and then remove from the nose.
- Do not sniff after spraying the medicine into your nose



- Stay sitting down for at least one minute after using fentanyl nasal spray as it can make you feel lightheaded
- Replace the protective cap on the bottle and put the bottle back into the child-resistant container
- Store at room temperature in a dry area out of reach of children
- Do not blow your nose for at least 30 minutes after using fentanyl nasal spray
- If your pain is not adequately improved within 10 minutes, repeat the spray into the other nostril, if prescribed.

How do I know I / my child has received the dose?

You / your child may not feel the spray go into your nose but you have received it when the plunger has been pressed up (Instanyl) or the container number (counting window) changes (PecFent).

How do I know the medicine is used up?

There are two kinds of fentanyl spray:

Instanyl comes in different pack sizes of 2, 6, 8 and 10 single use dose containers in a child resistant blister pack.

PecFent comes in pack size of 8 full sprays per bottle in a child resistant container. After the first spray, number 1 will appear in counting window. This will go up each time the spray is used. When you see red 8 in the counting window, the bottle is finished.

When finished, it should be discarded safely in the household waste or taken back to the chemist or hospital you attend.

How much fentanyl nasal spray should I / my child take?

- You should **not** take more than one or two sprays of fentanyl for each pain episode, as prescribed
- You should wait 4 hours before taking any further doses for a new pain episode
- You can use this medicine for a maximum of 4 episodes of pain in 24 hours
- If you / your child's pain does not get better after the prescribed dose of fentanyl nasal spray, either follow your pain plan (if you have one) or contact The Royal Marsden symptom care team for further advice
- If you / your child frequently suffers from breakthrough pain episodes, the symptom care team will review and may make changes to your prescribed pain medicines.

The most common side effects of fentanyl are:

- nausea
- vomiting
- dizziness
- headache
- constipation
- sleepiness

Is there anything else I /my child need to be made aware of?

If nose bleeds or nasal discomfort occurs while taking fentanyl nasal spray, please speak to your symptom care team.



Grapefruit and grapefruit juice may interact with fentanyl so do not take within 30 minutes of using the nasal spray. No other rapid onset fentanyl products should be taken at the same time as nasal fentanyl.

Contact details

If you have any questions, please contact:

The Royal Marsden Children and Young People's Oncology Outreach and Symptom Care Nurse Specialists (CYPOONS).

Tel: 020 8661 3625 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm)

Out of hours (evenings and weekends)

Tel: 020 8642 6011 follow the electronic message to The Royal Marsden switchboard and ask for the PATCH team.

