

Phenylephrine = Placebo? (Broadcast)

INTRO:

SUDAFED HAS BEEN A HOUSEHOLD NAME FOR DECADES. RECENTLY – THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION DETERMINED ONE OF ITS INGREDIENTS – SUDAFED P-E – IS NOT EFFECTIVE AND SHOULD BE BANNED FROM OVER-THE-COUNTER USE.

TAKE VO

THE P-E COMES FROM THE DRUG'S ACTIVE INGREDIENT – PHENYLEPHRINE (**PHEN-uh-leh-frin**) – MARKETING AS A PRODUCT TAKEN BY MOUTH THAT SHOULD PROVIDE TEMPORARY RELIEF OF NASAL CONGESTION. MANY OTHER OVER-THE-COUNTER PRODUCTS CONTAIN THIS INGREDIENT – INCLUDING ITEMS UNDER THE BRAND NAMES NYQUIL... BENADRYL... MUCINEX AND MORE.

JASON SCHIED (**SHIED**) IS THE DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY SERVICES FOR COMMUNITY AND SPECIALTY PROGRAMS AT OSF... HE SAYS THE F-D-A IS NOW SEEKING PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL INTO 2025. HE OFFERS A FEW OTHER ALTERNATIVES YOU CAN TRY TO LESSEN CONGESTION.

TAKE SOT | JASON SCHIED | DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY SERVICES | COMMUNITY AND SPECIALTY PHARMACY | OSF HEALTHCARE

"If you're looking for an oral decongestant, the original Sudafed is a good alternative," Scheid adds. "You have to show your ID and there's purchase limitations. It has shown itself to be an effective alternative. There are nasal decongestants you can try, like Afrin. There's also nasal steroids and antihistamines, this gets more into the allergy nasal sprays that can help prevent congestion symptoms. You can pick any of those up over the counter at a local pharmacy."

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THE F-D-A CLARIFIES THAT WHILE IT'S PROPOSING THESE PRODUCTS BE BANNED FROM STORE SHELVES... THERE AREN'T ANY SAFETY CONCERNS ATTACHED TO THEM. THEY'RE SIMPLY JUST NOT EFFECTIVE. SCHEID SAYS MORE NATURAL REMEDIES LIKE STANDING IN A HOT SHOWER... OR USING A COOL MIST HUMIDIFIER CAN HELP EASE CONGESTION.

EXTRA INFO/SOUNDBITES:

Jason Scheid, the director of Pharmacy Services for Community & Specialty Pharmacy for OSF HealthCare, says the FDA is now seeking public comments on its proposal until May 7, 2025. A final order will be issued after the 180-day comment period.

"At that point (after the 180 days) the FDA will provide the manufacturers with their due warning whether they have to pull the products or reformulate it to find an alternative that meets the labeling requirements," Scheid says.

"It might provide you a placebo-type effect. You might just feel better because of the other ingredients in it, but that one (phenylephrine) solely is not meeting the effectiveness criteria to remain over the counter," Scheid says.

"Using that hot shower or cool mist humidifier will add moisture to where you are to help with that congestion," Scheid says. "Something as simple as saline nasal spray will add some moisture to the nasal cavity and give some relief."

It's always important to [clean your humidifier](#) after each use to prevent mold and other bacteria from being released in the air.

Don't overdo it on the nasal sprays

Another reason why it's important to read labels is the effect nasal sprays can have if they are used longer than their intended use. Most nasal decongestant sprays will recommend using the product for three days or less.

"What happens is a rebound nasal congestion, where you lose the effectiveness of the medication to relieve that pressure, and it causes more pressure if it's used more than just a couple days," Scheid says.

If congestion is caused by allergies

About one quarter (25.7%) of American adults have a seasonal allergy, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), while nearly one in five (18.9%) children are affected. Scheid says treating nasal congestion for those with allergies is a longer-lasting issue.

"You're looking at longer-term solutions then. You're either using a long-term nasal steroid spray or antihistamine spray, or oral antihistamine."

Scheid says if the FDA's proposal goes through in May, pharmacy shelves will look a whole lot different than they do now.

Another way to clear congestion is [to stay hydrated](#). Drinking water will help thin out mucus discharge from the nose and loosen up any phlegm in the lungs, making it easier to cough up.