

## Inhaler with a Spacer

A metered dose inhaler is a small aerosol canister in a plastic holder that gives a burst of medicine straight to the lungs.

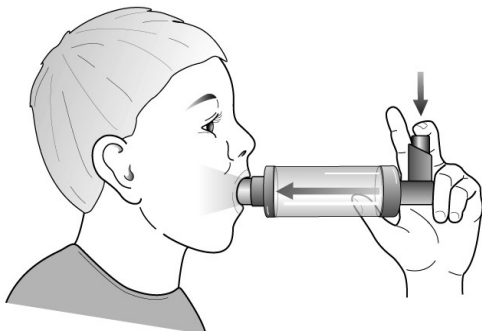
Adding a spacer makes it easier for you to use the inhaler and makes sure the right amount of medicine gets into the lungs. The purpose of the spacer is to hold the medicine released from the inhaler so you have time to inhale it into your lungs. Using a spacer may lessen side effects.

### Getting the Inhaler and Spacer Ready for Use

Prime the inhaler by shaking it for 5 seconds. Then spray 4 puffs into the air away from your face. Your inhaler should be primed before the first use and if you have not used it in 2 weeks.

### How to Use Your Inhaler and Spacer

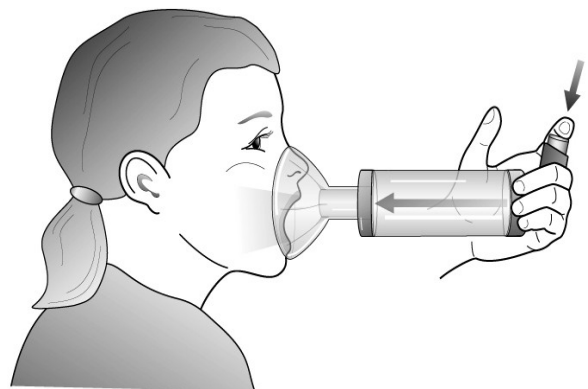
1. Remove the mouthpiece caps from the spacer and the inhaler.
2. Put the inhaler mouthpiece into the larger end of the spacer.
3. Shake the inhaler and spacer well, mixing the medicine properly.
4. Sit upright, tilt your head back slightly and breathe out to empty your lungs of air.
5. Put the spacer mouthpiece in your mouth and seal your lips around the mouthpiece.
6. Squeeze the inhaler once to release one puff.



7. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your mouth over 3-5 seconds. If you are not able to take a single deep breath, you may take 3 or 4 slow deep breaths.
8. Hold your breath for 10 seconds or as long as you can. This allows the medicine to reach all of the areas of your lungs.
9. Remove the spacer from your mouth and breathe out.
10. Resume normal breathing.
11. Shake inhaler well between puffs.
12. Repeat steps 3 through 11 for more puffs.

### How to Use a Spacer and Mask with Your Child's Metered Dose Inhaler

1. Remove the mouthpiece caps from the spacer and the inhaler.
2. Put the inhaler mouthpiece into the larger end of the spacer.
3. Shake the inhaler and spacer well to mix the medicine.
4. Sit your child upright and provide support with the child's chin tilted up slightly.
5. Gently place the mask over your child's mouth and nose. Squeeze the inhaler once to release a puff of medicine into the spacer.



6. Keep holding the mask over your child's mouth and nose for 5-6 breaths. You should see the flap valve inside the spacer open slightly with each breath.
7. Remove the mask from your child's face.
8. Shake inhaler well between puffs.
9. Repeat steps 3 through 7 for more puffs.

### **Metered Dose Inhaler Facts**

Store your inhaler at room temperature.

Avoid storing it in your car, as extreme hot and cold can affect the medicine.

If you are using a steroid inhaler, rinse your mouth or brush your teeth after each use. If you are giving your child a steroid inhaler using the spacer with mask, wipe their face with warm water and dry their face. Have your child rinse their mouth if they can to avoid thrush.

Check the expiration date on the inhaler. Each inhaler has a certain amount of puffs or "actuations." If your inhaler does not have a counter on it, you will need to figure out how many puffs you use a day. Mark it on a calendar so you know when to start a new inhaler.

Be sure to refill your inhaler prescription well before the inhaler is empty when the counter reaches zero.

### **Cleaning the Inhaler and Spacer**

- Wash the spacer with dish soap and warm water weekly. Rinse with warm water and air dry on a clean towel.
- Do not scrub the inside of the spacer; it has a special coating inside.
- Do not put the inhaler in water.
- Once a week, you can use a dry cotton swab to clean the opening where the puff sprays out of the inhaler.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 11/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6841