How to use an inhaler with a spacer
Works as well as a nebulizer!

Take cap off the inhaler. Check for and remove any dust, lint, or other objects. Shake the inhaler well.

Attach the inhaler to the spacer.

Put lips around device, press inhaler one time. This puts one puff of medicine into the spacer.

Breathe in deeply and slowly, and hold your breath.

Remove the device from the mouth. Then hold your breath for 5 secs. Then breathe normally away from the spacer.

Wait 1 minute.

If your child needs to take another puff of medicine, wait 1 minute. After one minute, repeat steps 3 to 6.

Rinsing is only necessary if the medicine you just took was an inhaled steroid. Have your child rinse his or her mouth out with water after the last puff of medicine. Make sure your child spits the water out. Do not allow the child to swallow the water. Recap the inhaler.

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From the American College of Chest Physicians.
Illustrations by Paula Falco

What is this? This is a QR code. To use it, go to the app store on your smartphone, search for ‘QR code readers’ and download the free app.

To learn more about asthma, scan this code with the app to link to Respiratory Health Association website. Or go to: www.tinyurl.com/asthmalib

Asthma discharge plan

1. Take your asthma medicine

Your oral steroid is:

- 1st dose time/date
- How much
- How often
- For how long

- It is very important you complete the dosage

Things to know about oral steroids:
- is another powerful “rescue” medicine
- if you were given these in the emergency room, it is very important that you finish them

Your “rescue” medicine is:

- 1st dose time/date
- Number of puffs
- How often
- For how long

- After that, use ONLY when symptoms occur

Things to know about rescue medicine:
- should be used only if your child is having symptoms during an asthma attack/with symptoms
- is typically albuterol with a name like: Proventil, Pro-Air, Ventolin, Xopenex

Your “controller” medicine is:

- 1st dose time/date
- Number of puffs
- How often

- Take every day EVEN if no visible symptoms

Things to know about controller medicine:
- should be used every day, even if your child has no symptoms
- examples include Pulmicort, Flunisolide, Azmacort, Advair
- may be an allergy medication, such as Singulair and Accolate

Mark your meds at the pharmacy:

- red sticker for “rescue” medicine
- green sticker for “controller” medicine

Mark your meds at the pharmacy:

Other:

2. See your child’s doctor within 3 days of your ER visit

Doctor’s name
Clinic telephone number
Your appointment date and time
3 Read the signs

GREEN ZONE
Go play
Even if your child shows no signs of breathing problems, keep using the "controller" medicine every day.

- breathes easily
- plays as usual
- no coughing or wheezing
- peak flow is at normal level
- sleeps soundly

YELLOW ZONE
Call doctor
If your child shows any of these signs, use "rescue" medicine right away, keep using "controller" medicine, and call your doctor.

- breathes fast when standing in place
- coughs a lot at night
- hurts to breathe deeply
- hard to sleep because of breathing problems
- breathing does not get better within 20 minutes of taking "rescue" medicine

RED ZONE
Get help
If your child has any of these signs, use "rescue" medicine, and go to the emergency room or call 911.

- hard time saying a full sentence without a breath
- hard time walking
- hard time breathing when sitting in place
- breathing gets worse within 20 minutes of taking "rescue" medicine
- ribs show when breathing
- breathing so hard that they are drowsy or sleepy
- lips or fingernails are grey or blue

4 Stay on top of asthma

- Don't wait! Call with questions
  Call your child's regular doctor as soon as possible to help you understand your child's asthma and home treatment plan.

- Identify your child's asthma triggers
  Build a trigger list of what seems to make your child's asthma act up. Add to that list as you notice new triggers. Try to help your child avoid these!
  If your child has a cold, use your child's action plan; and help them to blow their nose.
  Avoid smoking—a known asthma trigger—and avoid having your child in a house where someone smokes.
  Here are some examples of common asthma triggers:

- Give medications as prescribed
  Review how to use the inhalers with your child's doctor.
  Develop tricks to help remind you to give the medications.
  What might be useful tricks?
  set an alert on your smartphone
  keep medicine by your coffee pot

- Take your child to the doctor regularly
  Your child's doctor is there to help—they want to see how well your child is doing and to review your child's symptom control.
  Together you and your doctor will discuss a new Asthma Home Plan, with instructions for when your child's asthma is under control and when it is not well-controlled.