

SPACERS AND METERED DOSE INHALERS

Overview



Many asthma medications come in a small metal canister called a metered dose inhaler (MDI). The inhaler delivers a short burst of the medication to your lungs. Doctors recommend that you use a spacer every time you use your MDI.



A spacer is a holding chamber that attaches to your MDI. Using a spacer with your MDI will deliver the medication to your lungs more effectively. There are many different types of spacers; your health care provider can prescribe and show you how to use the one that is best for you.



The order in which you take your medicine is very important. If your health care provider has given you more than one inhaler (ex. quick-relief and controller), know which one to use when.



You should regularly check the expiration date on your inhaler, and make sure your inhaler always contains medicine. By tracking the number of doses in your inhaler, you will know when to get refills. Most inhalers will give you 200 puffs of medicine.

Using MDIs and Spacers

1 Remove all food, candy, and gum from your mouth.

2 Stand up straight.

3 Remove the cap from your inhaler and spacer. Make sure to clean out any dust or fuzz so there is nothing inside.

4 Shake the inhaler for 5 seconds.

5 Place the inhaler into the spacer. Take a deep breath in and out.

6 Put the spacer in your mouth and seal your lips tightly around the mouthpiece.

7 Press down on your inhaler and take a long, slow breath in.

8 Hold your breath for 10 seconds, then breathe out.

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Care Tips



Clean your spacer and MDI each week to prevent the buildup of medicine and or dust.



To clean your inhaler, remove the metal canister from the L-shaped plastic tube. Rinse only the plastic pieces in warm water and let them dry overnight.



To clean your spacer, take the spacer apart (as recommended by manufacturer's instructions) and wash each piece separately with warm, soapy water. Do not rinse. Let it air-dry.



Check your spacer regularly to ensure there are no cracks or breaks that could allow medicine to escape. Replace a spacer that has cracks.