

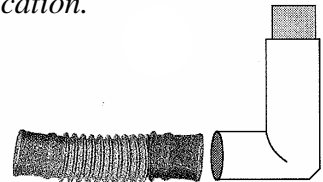


Using Your Inhaler - Tips for Best Results

Inhaled medication is frequently the most effective medication available for asthma and obstructive lung disease.

Proper mechanics in the use of your inhaler are essential for the medication to be effective. We recommend that you review the proper method of use to maintain maximal efficacy of the medication.

- 1) Sit erect, neck straight, chin forward.
- 2) Shake the inhaler vigorously. Remove the cap and hold the inhaler upright.
- 3) If you have not used the inhaler within 14 days, prime by squirting two puffs in the air.
- 4) Place the inhaler in your mouth and close your lips around the mouth piece. Do not push your tongue into the mouth piece.
- 5) Start to inhale slowly. As soon as you start to inhale, press your inhaler and continue to inhale as deep as possible. Do not stop inhaling after pressing the inhaler. You are trying to inhale the medication deeply into your lungs.
- 6) When you can not breathe in anymore, take the inhaler out of your mouth, close your mouth, and hold your breath for 10 seconds.
- 7) Exhale slowly.
- 8) Repeat these steps for each dose/puff that your doctor prescribed. Wait at least 30 seconds between puffs if more than one is prescribed.
- 9) Clean your inhaler once a week by removing canister and wash plastic under water.



Spacers

Your physician may recommend a spacer with your inhaler. A spacer is simply an extension that you place onto your inhaler that slows the inhalation of your medication. This may improve your ability to inhale the medication into your lungs.

A spacer is also helpful if you have difficulty coordinating your hand squeeze and your breath. It may also decrease the taste of the medication.

Common Errors

- **Not shaking the inhaler.** Shake the inhaler before every puff.
- **Spraying the inhaler.** You must inhale the medication into your lungs. You must be inhaling while you actuate the inhaler and continue until you can not breathe in anymore.
- **Two puffs with one breath.** Use only one puff for each breath. Depressing the inhaler twice with one breath wastes the medication.

Common Problems

- **Sore throat or hoarse voice.** Rinsing your mouth and drinking a sip of water after use and using a spacer will frequently correct these problems.
- **Tremor or shaking.** Certain inhalers may cause a shake or tremor in your hands or make your heart pound. This is not uncommon with bronchodilating medications such as Albuterol, Ventolin, Proventil, Maxair, and Serevent. Although uncomfortable, it is not dangerous and will pass within 30-60 minutes.

When Is It Empty?

Many inhalers have counters to keep track of doses remaining. If your inhaler does not have a counter, it is best to keep track of the puffs used and discard after total doses are used.

Final Point

- Rinse mouth and drink a sip of water after using, especially with a steroid inhaler.
- If you are using your rescue inhaler more than twice a week, you should contact your doctor.