

# Using an Inhaler and Spacer

Using your inhaler correctly is an important part of taking care of yourself.

A metered-dose inhaler and a spacer can help you get the right amount of medicine right into your lungs.

Metered dose means that the inhaler gives a measured amount of medicine each time you use it.

This type of inhaler delivers medicine in the form of a liquid mist.

A spacer is a chamber that attaches to the inhaler.

The spacer holds the dose of medicine while you inhale it.

A spacer makes it easier for you to get the medicine into your lungs.

Before you get started, here are a few things to remember.

Inhalers come in different shapes, sizes, and doses.

Each kind is used differently.

Read the instructions that come with your inhaler and your spacer.

Make sure you use the right inhaler at the right time.

Label each inhaler if you have more than one.

Check the instructions to see if you need to prime the inhaler before use.

Prime means to get it ready.

If your inhaler needs priming, follow your inhaler's instructions.

Before you begin, be sure you've worked with a nurse, doctor, pharmacist, or respiratory therapist to make sure you're using your inhaler correctly.

But here's how someone would generally use a metered-dose inhaler with a spacer.

Begin by shaking the inhaler for 5 seconds.

Remove the cap.

Next, hold the inhaler upright with the mouthpiece at the bottom.

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Then place the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the spacer.

Now, stand or sit up straight.

With the spacer a short distance from your mouth, breathe out slowly and completely.

Next, place the spacer's mouthpiece in your mouth.

Close your lips tightly around the mouthpiece, and keep your tongue away from the opening.

Press down on the inhaler to spray 1 puff of medicine into the spacer.

Then start breathing in slowly and deeply.

Hold your breath for 5 to 10 seconds.

Remove the spacer's mouthpiece from your mouth.

Then breathe out slowly.

If you need another puff of medicine, wait 1 minute between puffs.

Remove the inhaler from the spacer and replace the caps.

Rinse your mouth with water if the inhaler has corticosteroids, such as budesonide.

Do not swallow the water.

So that's how to use a metered-dose inhaler with a spacer.

Now here are some other reminders.

Use the inhaler's dose counter to see how many doses are left, and get inhaler refills before you run out.

Follow the instructions for cleaning the inhaler and the spacer.

This will help you do it the right way for each inhaler.

At first, learning how to use an inhaler can be stressful.

But with practice, using a metered-dose inhaler and spacer can help you feel better and breathe easier.

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And if you have questions, you can always call your doctor.

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