

Steps for Using Your Inhaler

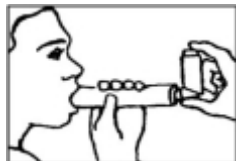
Steps for using your Inhaler

Please demonstrate your inhaler technique at every visit.

1. Remove the cap and hold inhaler upright.
2. Shake the inhaler.
3. Tilt your head back slightly and breathe out slowly.
4. Position the inhaler in one of the following ways (A or B is optimal, but C is acceptable for those who have difficulty with A or B. C is required for breath-activated inhalers):



A. Open mouth with inhaler 1 to 2 inches away.



B. Use spacer/holding chamber (that is recommended especially for young children and for people using corticosteroids).



C. In the mouth. Do not use for corticosteroids.



D. Note: Inhaled dry powder capsules require a different inhalation technique. To use a dry powder inhaler, it is important to close the mouth tightly around the mouthpiece of the inhaler and to inhale rapidly.

5. Press down on the inhaler to release medication as you start to breathe in slowly.
6. Breathe in slowly (3 to 5 seconds).
7. Hold your breath for 10 seconds to allow the medicine to reach deeply into your lungs.
8. Repeat puff as directed. Waiting 1 minute between puffs may permit second puff to penetrate your lungs better.
9. Spacers/holding chambers are useful for all patients. They are particularly recommended for young children and older adults and for use with inhaled corticosteroids.

Avoid common inhaler mistakes. Follow these inhaler tips:

Breathe out before pressing your inhaler.

Inhale slowly.

Breathe in through your mouth, not your nose.

Press down on your inhaler at the start of inhalation (or within the first second of inhalation).

Keep inhaling as you press down on inhaler.

Press your inhaler only once while you are inhaling (one breath for each puff).

Make sure you breathe in evenly and deeply.

Note: When steroids are inhaled it is useful to gargle and rinse mouth to eliminate the medication that is deposited in the oro-pharynx.

NOTE: Other inhalers are becoming available in addition to those illustrated above. Different types of inhalers may require different techniques. Source: Expert Panel Report 2: Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma. National Asthma Education and Prevention Program, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 1997.

Figure modified from Physicians Information and Education Resource (PIER), Asthma module.

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