

# How to keep your child's inhaler working?

- Do not leave the MDI in a place where it may get hot or wet. This includes car trunks and glove boxes, or anywhere in the direct sunlight. Do not leave the MDI in the kitchen or bathroom.
- Clean the spacer every 2 weeks with mild soap and warm water. Rinse with clean water. Put on a towel to let the air dry it. Do not use a towel to dry the inside of the spacer. Follow any instructions that come with the spacer. Some spacers can be washed in the dishwasher.
- Keep your asthma inhaler clean so that it will work right. The inhaler can clog, making it hard to get the full dose of your medicine. Rinse the plastic part under warm water. Run water for at least 30 seconds at a time once a week or more. Let it air dry.



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## How to use a Meter Dose Inhaler and Spacer



### What is a Meter Dose Inhaler (MDI)?

An MDI is a small tool with medicine inside. The medicine in an MDI can be quick relief or controller.

- Quick relief medicine is used for asthma symptoms. It opens up the airways. It helps your child breathe better.
- Controller medicine is used every day if ordered. Controller medicine is used every day even when your child feels fine. It helps prevent asthma symptoms.

## Why should your child use a Spacer with a Meter Dose Inhaler (MDI)?

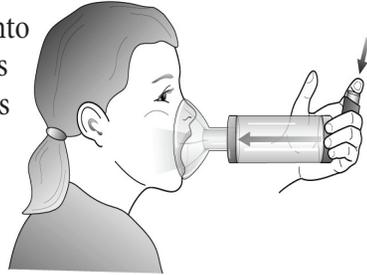
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When a spacer is not used some medicine stays in your child's mouth. It doesn't get into your child's lungs. Always use a spacer. Spacers come in many shapes and make using an MDI easy.

## What is a spacer?

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A spacer is a plastic tube. You put the inhaler into the end without the mouthpiece. A spacer helps the medicine get into your child's lungs. It helps your child get the full dose of the medicine. You can use a spacer with a mask or mouthpiece.



## What do you need to know?

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- Inhaled medicines work better than medicine you take by mouth.
- Your child will have fewer side effects with inhaled medicine.
- A spacer will make sure your child gets the full dose of medicine.
- "Prime" MDI before using it. Hold the MDI away from your mouth and spray it once into the open air. Prime your MDI if your inhaler is brand new, or if you have not used it for more than 3 days.
- Priming will help make sure your child gets the full dose when using the inhaler.
- Rinse your child's mouth with water after using an inhaler with controller medicine. Have your child spit out the water. Do not swallow the water!
- Keep track! Write down each time your child uses the inhaler. This is the only way you can tell if your child has used up all of the medicine. Ask the pharmacist how many puffs are in your child's MDI.
- Do not float the inhaler in water. This will not tell you if it is empty. It will damage the inhaler.



## How To Use a Meter Dose Inhaler (MDI) and Spacer

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Ask your doctor or nurse to check how well your child is using an inhaler. Make sure your child follows the steps below.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Remove the cap from the inhaler. Make sure opening is clean. Shake inhaler 5 seconds.
3. Put the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the end of the spacer.
4. Stand or sit up as straight as you can.
5. Use one hand to hold the spacer and the other hand for the inhaler. See picture.



6. **If a mouthpiece is used**, blow out all the way first. Then place mouthpiece of spacer in mouth.
7. Close lips tightly around the mouthpiece.
8. Push down on the top of the inhaler once.
9. Take 1 slow, deep breath.
10. Hold breath for 10 seconds. (Count to 10.) If you h breath was too fast.
11. Breathe out slowly away from spacer.
12. Put the cap back on the mouthpiece. This will keep it clean and ready to use.
13. Wait 1 minute before taking another dose if more than 1 dose is ordered.
14. **If mask is used**, hold snugly covering your child's nose and mouth. Have child breathe in 3 to 5 times.



You press down on the inhaler to release a mist of medicine. Your child breathes the medicine in through their mouth. When inhaler is used with a spacer the medicine gets into your child's lungs easily.