

Using Your MDI With a Spacer

Patient Education Guide

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF
CHEST
P H Y S I C I A N S

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To make your breathing better, you **MUST** take your medicine as explained below. Following these instructions puts more of the medicine into your lungs. This will open up your air passages and help you breathe easier and feel better. You need to ask your health-care provider or pharmacist how many puffs of medicine your metered-dose inhaler (MDI) has when it is full. You need to keep track of how many puffs of medicine you take every day, so you can have your MDI refilled before you run out of medicine. Before using the MDI, please read the priming or preparing instructions. Your MDI and spacer should be cleaned once a week. See instructions on cleaning your MDI.



1 Take cap off MDI. Check for and remove any dust, lint, or other objects. Shake MDI well.



2 Attach MDI to spacer.



3 Sit up straight and breathe out normally.



4 Put mouthpiece of spacer in your mouth. Close your lips around the mouthpiece and make a tight seal. Press down on the MDI. This puts one puff of medicine into the spacer.



5 To breathe in that one puff of medicine, **TAKE A SLOW, DEEP BREATH.** Breathe in as much air as you can. Try to fill up your lungs completely. It is important that the breath be **SLOW** and **DEEP.**



6 Remove the mouthpiece from your mouth. **HOLD** your breath for 10 seconds. If you cannot hold your breath for 10 seconds, hold your breath as long as you can.



7 If you need to take another puff of medicine, wait 1 minute. After 1 minute, repeat steps 3-6.



8 Recap the MDI. Rinse your mouth with water after you have taken your last puff of medicine. Make sure you spit the water out, do not swallow it. *Rinsing is only necessary if the medicine you just took was a corticosteroid, such as Flovent®, Beclovent®, Vanceril®, Aerobid®, or Azmacort®.*

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Priming and Cleaning Your MDI and Spacer

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Priming Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI)

Preparing your MDI will need to be done for every new MDI before it is used or if it has been a long time since you last used your MDI. There are two types of MDIs. You need to ask your health-care provider or pharmacist if your MDI is a HFA or a CFC. The type of MDI you have will dictate how you prepare your MDI before use.

HFA MDIs: If your MDI is new or has not been used in 2 weeks shake, the MDI very well then press down on the MDI four times wasting four puffs into the air. After this is done, you are ready to take your medicine. See instructions on using your MDI (separate sheet).

CFC MDIs: If your MDI is new or has not been used in 12 hours, shake the MDI very well, then press down on the MDI once, wasting one puff of medicine into the air. After this is done, you are ready to take your medicine. See instructions on using your MDI (separate sheet).

Cleaning Your MDI



1 Take metal canister out of plastic container.



2 Rinse plastic container with warm water at least once a week.



3 Let plastic container air dry.



4 Replace metal canister in plastic container.

Cleaning Your Spacer



1 Remove rubber end where MDI fits.



2 Fill a sink or deep bowl with warm water. Add one drop of liquid detergent.



3 Place both pieces in the warm soapy water, and gently shake both pieces back and forth.



4 Rinse only the mouthpiece in running water.



5 Shake to remove the water.



6 Let air dry in vertical position. Do not dry with towels.



7 Put rubber end back on spacer when completely dry.

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