

Paediatric Respiratory Medicine

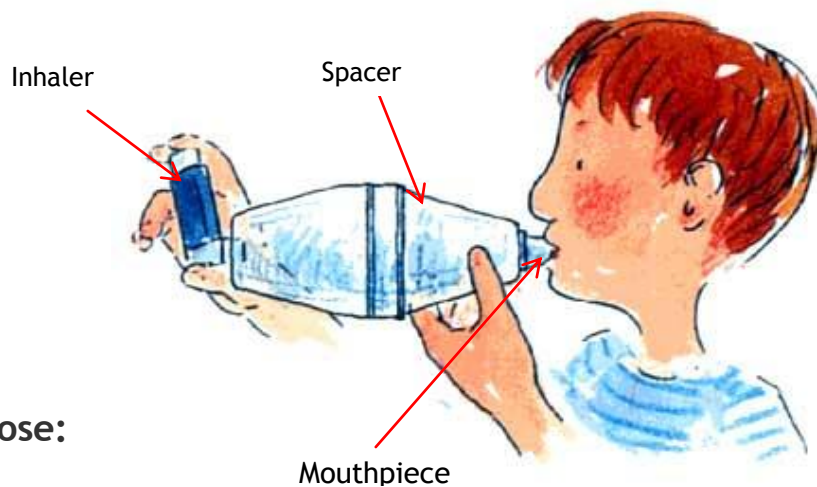
Parent information sheet

Using an inhaler and spacer with my child

The five tidal breath technique

When you first get the spacer, wash it in warm soapy water and leave to **drip-dry**. It should then be washed in this way every month. **Do not** dry with a towel.

In children under three years you will need to use a mask. Above this age use the mouthpiece.



How to give a dose:

1. Shake the inhaler well.
2. Fit the inhaler into the opening at the end of the spacer.
3. Put the mouthpiece into your child's mouth. Ensure a good seal with their lips.
4. Press the inhaler **once** and ask your child to take **five** slow normal breaths in and out through the spacer. This is called tidal breathing.
5. If a second puff is required follow steps three and four again.

Your doctor or asthma nurse will tell you how many puffs are needed of each inhaler.

If more than two puffs are needed at a time, shake the inhaler after every second puff.

Rules to remember:

- Only put **one** puff of medicine into the spacer at a time. If you put in more than one puff, the droplets of spray stick together and coat the sides of the spacer so your child actually gets less medicine.
- Wash your spacer once a month - leave it to **drip-dry** as this helps to prevent the medication sticking to the sides.
- Spacers should ideally be replaced at least every year.
- **After using an inhaled steroid (preventer) rinse the mouth or brush teeth.**

Other tips:

- Show your child how to use their inhaler and spacer first without medicine in it.
- Turn the spacer into a toy - decorate it with coloured stickers.
- Turn it into a counting game. Count aloud as your child takes each breath.
- Have a routine - set a time of day to give regular medicine (such as before brushing teeth).
- Praise your child when she/he uses their spacer correctly.

Many parents find it difficult to use a spacer with very young children. Don't worry - you are not alone, but do keep trying. Getting a child to take inhaled medicine properly is the most important way to control their asthma.