

Metered-Dose Inhaler with a Mask Spacer



- 1** Shake the inhaler, and remove the inhaler cap. Check the inhaler instructions to see if you need to prime your inhaler before you use it. If it needs priming, follow the instructions on how to prime your inhaler.



- 2** Hold the inhaler upright with the mouthpiece at the bottom, and insert the inhaler into the mask spacer.



- 3** Place the mask spacer securely over your child's mouth and nose, being sure to get a good seal. The mask must fit snugly, with no gaps between the mask and the skin.



- 4** With the mask spacer in place, press down on the inhaler to spray one puff of medicine into the spacer.



- 5** Keep the mask spacer in place and have your child breathe in and out normally for about 20 seconds. This is how long it takes to breathe in all the medicine.

If your child needs another puff of medication, wait 30 to 60 seconds and repeat steps 4 and 5.

Before using a metered-dose inhaler (MDI) with a mask spacer:

Talk with your doctor to be sure that you know how to use the MDI and mask spacer correctly. Be sure your child uses them exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

Depending on his or her age, teach your child how to check that he or she has the correct medication. If your child uses several inhalers, put a label on each one so that he or she knows which one to use at the right time. Consider using different colors or stickers to help your child see the difference between medications.

Check the label of the inhaler medicine to see how many inhalations should be in the canister. If you and your child know how many breaths he or she can take, the inhaler can be replaced before it runs out. Learn how to test the canister to estimate how much medicine is left. Your doctor or pharmacist can help you and your child with this.

Some powder may build up on the inhaler, but it is not necessary to clean the inhaler every day. Occasionally rinse the spacer or mouthpiece, cap, and case.



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Peak Expiratory Flow



Remove any gum or food you may have in your mouth.

1 Put the pointer on the gauge of the peak flow meter to 0 or the lowest number on the meter. In this photograph, this is about 50.



2 Attach the mouthpiece to the peak flow meter. Some meters don't have a separate mouthpiece.



3 While standing, take a deep breath.



4 Put the peak flow meter mouthpiece in your mouth, and close your lips tightly around the outside of the mouthpiece. Don't put your tongue inside the mouthpiece.



5 Breathe out as hard and as fast as you can for 1 or 2 seconds. A hard and fast breath usually produces a "huff" sound.



6 Check the number on the gauge, and write it down. This is your peak expiratory flow (PEF). In the photograph at left, the PEF is about 180. **Repeat the steps two more times.** After you have blown into the meter three times, take the highest number you received, and write it in your asthma diary or on another record sheet.

If you have never used a peak flow meter, talk with your health professional about how to use it correctly, and then practice using it.

Measure your PEF routinely. Check your breathing regularly, even if you are feeling good. PEF is lowest in the early morning and highest in the afternoon. When you measure your PEF once a day, **it needs to be done first thing in the morning before you use your asthma medicine.**

If you cough or make a mistake during the testing, do the test over.

Different brands of meters may give different values for results. If you change meters, you will need to determine your asthma zones using the new meter.

NOTE: If your best effort is in your red zone, take your relief medication immediately and call your doctor or go to the emergency room.