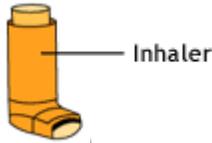


*Patient Education Sheet*

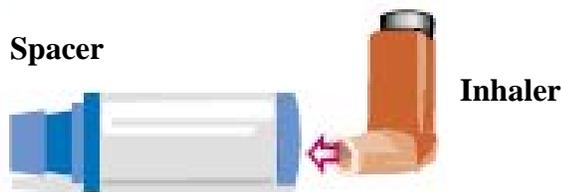
**What is a Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI) Spacer?**

**What is a MDI spacer?**



A spacer is a plastic device with a chamber that helps people with asthma or other breathing problems to inhale their medications from MDI containers directly into their lower airways, rather than into their throats. The asthma medication is sprayed from the inhaler into one end of the spacer and then breathed in over a period of time at the other end of the spacer.

There are valves at the end of the spacer where it is placed in the mouth to prevent the medication from escaping into the air. This allows you to breathe in the medication at your own pace.



**Who should use a spacer?**

- Adults who have difficulty coordinating the pressing of an inhaler with breathing in exactly at the same time.
- Children – spacers are made in different sizes and some are made with face masks for ease of use.
- People who use corticosteroid MDI inhalers because the spacer will help to

minimize irritation side effects of the steroid medication

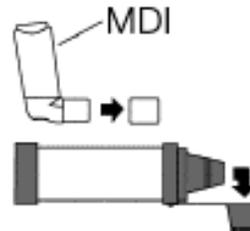
- People who are having an acute asthma attack to ensure that the inhaler medication is delivered directly to the lower airways and is not wasted by sitting in the throat.

**How is the spacer used?**

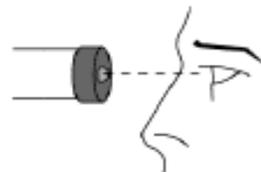
Before using the spacer, shake the MDI canister well.



1. Remove the caps from the MDI and the spacer.



2. Look for foreign objects in the spacer chamber.

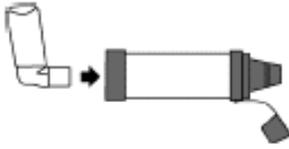


3. Insert the inhaler into the back of the spacer.

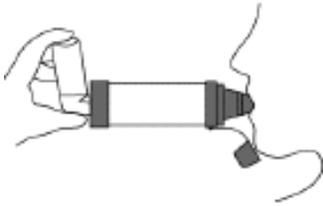
## How to care for a spacer:

The spacer should be cleaned once a week in a basin of warm water with a small amount of mild dish detergent by gently swishing the spacer around in the water. Rinse the spacer in the basin with plain warm water. Do not scrub the inside of the spacer or place it under fast running water as this will damage the valves.

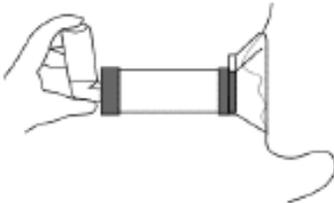
Allow the spacer to air dry – do not rub with a towel as this may damage the valves, and it may cause static build-up on the inside walls of the chamber, which makes the medication stick to the sides.



4. Put the mouthpiece up to mouth.

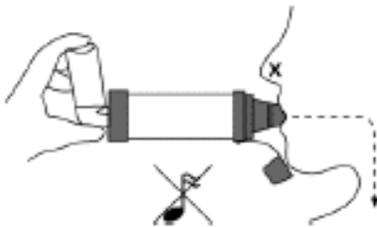


If using a mask spacer, place the mask up to face, covering nose and mouth.



5. Squeeze the MDI canister at the beginning a slow inhalation. If using a mask spacer, maintain a good seal on the mask and breath in 2 to 3 breaths after depressing the MDI canister.

If a whistling sound is heard, this means that you are inhaling too quickly – slow down inhalation.



6. Wait 30 seconds before repeating process with second MDI puff.

### Sources:

Asthma Society of Canada. Retrieved May 2010 from [www.asthma.ca/adults/treatment/spacers.php](http://www.asthma.ca/adults/treatment/spacers.php)

AeroChamber. Directions for use of AeroChamber.

3/2013