

Managing your child's asthma is a partnership between you and your child's health care provider. If care givers, health care providers, and the child all work together asthma **can be** controlled.

We want to help you and your child to manage asthma at home by providing a quick guide for next steps after your visit today.

Your provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Things to do at home to keep asthma under control:

- 1** Give your child the prescribed Controller medication **EVERYDAY** even if they do not have asthma symptoms. If you forget which medicine is for asthma control **call your health care provider**.
- 2** Make a plan to refill your child's asthma medications. Pharmacies have an auto refill program that will send you a reminder. Some pharmacies can even deliver medications to your home.
- 3** Know your child's triggers and avoid them when possible.
- 4** Have a written asthma action plan. Keep it in a place where all caregivers can see it. If you do not have a plan **call your health care provider**.
- 5** Help your child learn to take their asthma inhalers the right way so they get all of the medicine. **Always** use a spacer device.
- 6** Keep **ALL** asthma follow-up visits with your health care provider. Even if your child is feeling good.

## Helpful Tips



Set a "medication" reminder on your phone. Keep medicine in a certain place and have a routine.



Problems filling asthma medication? We are here to help. Don't wait until your child runs out of medicine! Call us.



**2<sup>nd</sup> hand smoke is always a trigger for asthma.**



Give a copy to your child's school or daycare with rescue medicine and spacer.



Always ask your health care provider to check your child's inhaler technique. You can be the coach at home.



Regular communication and visits with your health care provider increases the likelihood of keeping your child's asthma under control.

# Inhaler Technique Using Breath Hold

Using the inhaler the right way will help you and your child make sure the medicine gets into the lungs. When in doubt, ask your provider to show you how.

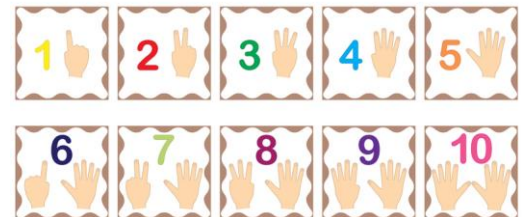
All inhalers and valved holding chambers need to be primed. Priming is a way to mix the medication in the inhaler so the dose your child receives is correct.



- 1** Remove cap and shake inhaler for 5 seconds.
- 2** Place inhaler in the back of the spacer
- 3** Remove spacer cap
- 4** Breathe air out away from the inhaler and spacer until lungs feel empty



- 5** Put lips around the mouthpiece to make a tight seal
- 6** Press the canister once and breathe in slowly and steadily until lungs are full
- 7** Hold breath for 10 seconds



Current as of: December 6, 2017

Author: [Healthwise Staff](#)

Medical Review: John Pope, MD - Pediatrics & Donald Sproule, MDCM, CCFP - Family Medicine & Adam Husney, MD - Family Medicine & Lora J. Stewart, MD - Allergy and Immunology & Martin J. Gabica, MD - Family Medicine

# Inhaler Technique Without Breath Hold

Using the inhaler the right way will help you and your child make sure the medicine gets into the lungs. When in doubt, ask your provider to show you how.

Very young children may not be ready to coordinate and hold their breath. If this is the case they can follow the steps below with a mask or mouthpiece:



**1** Remove cap and shake inhaler for 5 seconds.

**2** Place inhaler in the back of the spacer

**3** Remove spacer cap

**4** Breathe air out away from the inhaler and spacer until lungs feel empty



**5** Put lips around the mouthpiece to make a tight seal

**6** Press the canister once and breathe in slowly and steadily **four times**



All inhalers need to be primed. Priming is a way to mix the medication in the inhaler so the dose your child receives is correct.

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# Inhaler Technique with Mask for Young Children

Using the inhaler the right way will help you and your child make sure the medicine gets into the lungs. When in doubt, ask your provider to show you how. Very young children will need a mask valved holding chamber and an adult to give the inhaler.



Lots of verbal praise for doing a good job and wearing the mask will go along way with young children.

- 1** Remove cap and shake inhaler for 5 seconds.
- 2** Place inhaler in the back of the spacer
- 3** Gently place the mask of the spacer over the child's nose and mouth. You want to make a good seal, but not press down tightly on the child's face.
- 4** Press the canister once
- 5** Watch the child take 4 breaths in and out.
- 6** Remove mask from your child's face and give lots of praise.

All inhalers need to be primed. Priming is a way to mix the medication in the inhaler so the dose your child receives is correct.



There are two types of medicines prescribed for asthma: **controllers** and **relievers**



## Controllers

Controllers **PREVENT** asthma symptoms.

These medicines should be taken **EVERY DAY**, even if you are not having asthma symptoms.



## Relievers (Rescue Inhalers):



Relievers **TREAT** asthma symptoms

These medicines should **ONLY** be taken if you are having asthma symptoms or for exercise.

Your asthma action plan will tell you how much and when you should take a reliever/rescue inhaler.

When your child's asthma has been out of control and a trip to the hospital is required, it can be scary and exhausting. When you go home there are several important things to do to keep your child's asthma under control and get them feeling better quickly.

\*Remember, you are not in this alone and your health care provider can help you "get back on track" to control your child's asthma.



**Make sure your phone number is up to date at your health care provider office and the hospital your child was seen at. You may receive a call to check up on your child.**

**Call your health care provider and make an appointment within \_\_\_\_\_ days**

**Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_**

After you have been to the hospital for asthma:

**1** Finish all medications that were prescribed during the hospital visit.

**2** Schedule an appointment with your provider **within 30 days** of your hospital visit. This will help prevent your child from having another asthma flare-up.

**3** Monitor and coach your child to take their inhaler medication correctly. It may help to observe your child when they use their inhalers. **Always use a spacer device!**



Your child's rescue inhaler may have been prescribed on a schedule for several days after the hospital visit. Most children get oral steroids during and after a hospital visit. It is important to finish them as directed.



Write down what symptoms your child had and how their breathing looked. Your health care provider will want to know how often the controller medication was given in the 4 weeks before the hospital visit.



Good inhaler technique reduces the risk of making another trip to the hospital.

There may be times when your child's asthma will flare-up. **The quicker you start treatment the sooner they will feel better and you may be able to avoid a trip to the hospital.** Remember, you are not in this alone. Call your health care provider if you are experiencing an asthma flare or asthma symptoms keep coming back.

**Your provider:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_



## How to handle an asthma flare-up or uncontrolled symptoms:

**1** Treat with rescue medication using your child's asthma action plan at the earliest sign of a flare-up.

- Cough
- Wheeze (high pitched whistling or purring sound. You can hear it best when your child is breathing out)
- Throat Clearing
- Chest Tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Waking up at night with any of these symptoms.

**2** Signs that rescue medicine may not be enough

- Can't tell a difference in symptoms
- Symptoms coming back too soon (Medicine not lasting 4 hours)
- Needing more than 4 doses of rescue medicine in a day
- Constant coughing
- Waking up more than once per night with asthma symptoms.

**3** Recognize a medical emergency

- Gasping (breathing hard and fast)
- Ribs showing when breathing
- Neck or stomach sucking in while breathing
- Color change (blue or extremely pale)
- Hard to talk or walk

Don't ignore your "gut feeling". If you are uncomfortable with your child's symptoms **CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER NOW!**



If you do not have an asthma action plan, rescue medicine, or a spacer **CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER NOW!**



Do not "wait it out"! Symptoms of asthma can get worse! **CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER NOW!**



**Call 911 Now or Go Directly to the nearest emergency department.**