How To Use Your Medicines

Inhaler and Spacer Tips: Inhalers with spacers work as well as or better than nebulizers.

- Shake your canister really well.
- Prime your inhaler (see back of this page)
- **Always use a spacer**
  - If using a *mouthpiece*: Take a slow breath in and hold for 10 seconds.
  - If using a *mask*: Make a good seal around the mouth and nose and breathe in and out 6 times.
- Wait 1 minute between puffs.
- Rinse mouth after use.

Nebulizer Tips

- Most of the medication is lost if you try to give "blow by" treatments.
- If using a mask, make sure it is touching the skin around the mouth and nose.
- If using a mouthpiece, make sure the lips are sealed around it.
Common Asthma Triggers

- **Infections** - most commonly colds/flu from viruses, but also bacteria (sinus infections and/or pneumonia).
- **Allergies** – such as dust, pollens (from grass, trees, and weeds), molds, animals, cockroaches or food.
- **Exercise or active play** - especially running more than 5 minutes.
- **Night time** - most asthma is worse overnight.
- **Smoke** - tobacco smoke (cigarettes, cigars, hookahs), fireplace, wood burning stove, incense, and/or barbecue.
- **Irritating Fumes/Chemicals** - paints, perfumes, detergents, smog or anything with a strong odor.
- **Weather** - Cold air and weather changes (changes in temperature and/or humidity).
- **Stress/Emotions** - emotions don’t cause asthma, but in susceptible people, they may trigger it.
- **Acid Reflux** (Heartburn) – Acid coming from the stomach.

### Priming and Cleaning your Inhaler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Priming</th>
<th>Repriming</th>
<th>When to Reprime</th>
<th># of puffs</th>
<th>Cleaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albuterol (ProAir, Ventolin, Proventil, Xopenex)</td>
<td>4 puffs</td>
<td>4 puffs</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Rinse plastic case with water weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flovent (Fluticasone)</td>
<td>4 puffs</td>
<td>1 puff</td>
<td>7 days/dropped</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Qtip, No water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qvar (Beclomethasone)</td>
<td>2 puffs</td>
<td>2 puffs</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Wipe with tissue, No water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advair, Dulera, Symbicort</td>
<td>4 puffs</td>
<td>4 puffs</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Wipe with dry cloth, No water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Always prime your inhaler before your 1st use by puffing the inhaler into the air. See above chart for number of puffs.
- Re-prime your inhaler if it has not been used for the number of days listed above.
- For Flovent, Qvar, Advair, Symbicort or Dulera, do not use water to clean. Use a Qtip or cloth to de-clog the opening weekly.
- For Albuterol, remove the metal canister from the plastic case weekly. Rinse the plastic case only with warm water for 30 sec from both ends.