

# Inhaler technique

## Metered dose inhalers with Volumatic spacer



## Metered dose inhaler with volumatic spacer

1	Remove the cap from your inhaler
2	Shake your inhaler and insert the mouthpiece into the hole at the end of the volumatic spacer
3	Breathe out gently as far as is comfortable and <b>NOT</b> into the spacer
4	Put the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips around it Ensure your teeth and tongue are not blocking the mouthpiece
5	Press the canister down to release one puff of medicine into the spacer Breathe in as slowly and as steadily as possible
6	Remove the spacer from your mouth and hold your breath for up to 10 seconds or as long as you feel comfortable Then breathe out slowly If you find it difficult to take deep breaths, you can breathe in and out of the mouthpiece 4 to 5 times This is called <b>‘tidal breathing’</b> You will hear the spacer valve open and close as you do this
7	<b>Wait for up to 30 seconds</b> to allow your inhaler to refill If you need to take a second dose from your inhaler, repeat steps 2 - 6 If your inhaler contains a steroid ingredient, you should rinse your mouth with water or brush your teeth after using it; this is to prevent infections such as oral thrush Replace the cap after use.

## Using your inhaler with a volumatic spacer



Fit the two halves of the volumatic spacer together.

Line up the notch on one half with the slot on the other, then press the two halves firmly together.

Insert your inhaler into the volumatic spacer (see picture).

There are many different types of metered dose inhalers.

Your inhaler has been prescribed for you **only** and to treat your specific lung condition.

## How to look after your volumatic spacer

- With normal daily use, your volumatic spacer should be cleaned at least once a **month** and should be replaced after one **year**.
- Pull the two halves apart and gently soak them in warm water containing a mild detergent.
- Volumatic spacers are not suitable for dishwashers.
- Do not scrub or use brushes or anything abrasive.
- Do not rub the inside with a cloth or polish as this causes static build up which can affect how the device works.
- Leave the two halves at room temperature to drip dry overnight.
- You can clean the mouthpiece with a moist tissue after each use if needed.

## Why should I use a spacer device with my metered dose inhaler?

Did you know that even with perfect inhaler technique up to 80% of a dose can be wasted?

## Using a spacer device means:

- You can double the amount of drug from your inhaler getting into your lungs.
- It is easier to get the right dose of medicine.
- You may need to use less medicine.
- Spacers help prevent the medicine from sticking to the back of your throat. They help reduce the risk of side effects (such as sore throat, voice hoarseness or oral thrush if using steroid containing inhalers).

## References

- 7 Steps to Success – Inhaler Technique (2014) (adapted)
- Asthma UK 'How to use your inhaler' videos. Available at: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhaler-videos/>
- Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland "My Lungs My Life" videos. Available at: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhiaAMAGIBpe9RxC6KB3cnfykZq7CjSbD>
- 'Getting the basics right – Inhaler Technique' Primary Care Respiratory Society (2016).

## For further support and information, please contact:

Royal Sussex County Hospital

**COPD Nurse Specialist: 01273 523109**

Worthing Hospital

**Respiratory Nurse Specialists: 01903 205111 Ext. 85858**

St Richard's Hospital

**Respiratory Nurse Specialists: 01243 788122 Ext. 32395**

You can also contact your community pharmacist or practice nurse for advice.

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