Respiratory Health Series

How to Use a Metered-Dose Inhaler

WATCH THE VIDEO ONLINE!

http://www.healthjourneysupport.com/respiratory/using-an-mdi
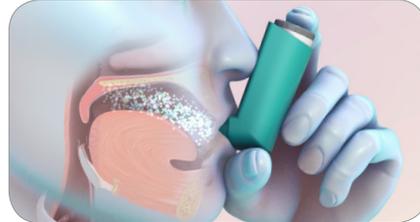
People who have lung conditions, like asthma or COPD, often take their medications using a hand-held device called a metered-dose inhaler, or MDI.
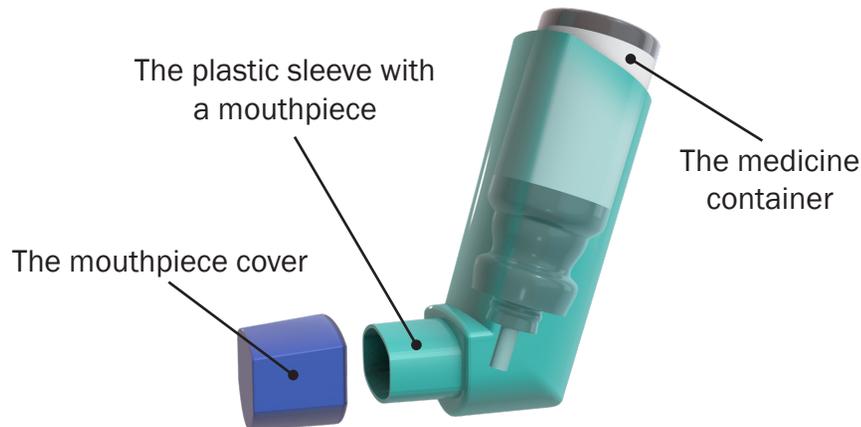
A metered-dose inhaler sprays medicine through your mouth so that it can reach your airways.

If your inhaler is not used the right way, some medicine may not enter your mouth, or some may remain in the back of your mouth. Either way, it may not reach your airways where it is needed.

It's important to follow the instructions that came with your metered-dose inhaler.

A metered-dose inhaler has three main parts:

The plastic sleeve with a mouthpiece

The medicine container

The mouthpiece cover

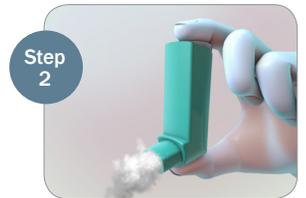

Using The Inhaler

Step 1

Before using your metered-dose inhaler, remove the mouthpiece cap and shake the inhaler.

Step 2

If this is the first time you are using your inhaler, or if you haven't used it in a while, you may need to prime it. Check the instructions for how and when to do this with your inhaler, as they can differ depending on the type of inhaler and medicine.

Step 3

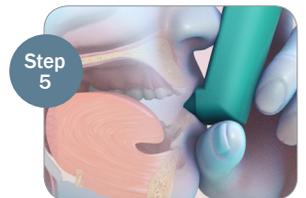When you're ready to use your inhaler, stand or sit up straight.

Step 4

Breathe in deeply, and breathe out completely to empty your lungs.

Step 5

After shaking the inhaler, put the mouthpiece in your mouth, and close your lips around it to form a tight seal.
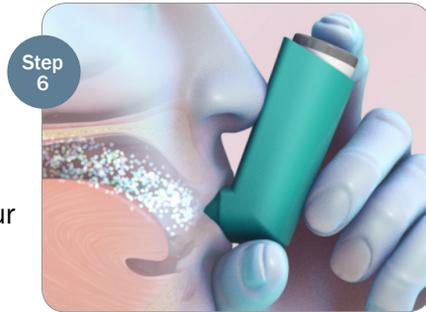
How to Use a Metered-Dose Inhaler

Step 6

As you breathe in through your mouth, press down firmly on the top of your inhaler to release one puff of medicine.

Keep breathing in slowly through your mouth for three to five seconds until your lungs are completely full.

Step 7

It is recommended that you hold your breadth for approximately ten counts.

Step 8

Finally, breathe out slowly through your mouth.

Step 9

If your medicine dose requires two puffs, you may need to wait before taking the second puff.

⚠️ Follow the instructions that came with your inhaler to know how long to wait between puffs.

Step 10

After using a steroid inhaler, rinse out your mouth with water and spit it out.

It's important to keep your inhaler clean so that it works properly.

⚠️ Check your inhaler's instructions for the right way to clean it.

Proper use of your metered-dose inhaler may help you control the symptoms of your lung condition.

⚠️ If you have questions about the use of your inhaler, talk to your health care provider or pharmacist. Ask them to watch you use your inhaler to see if you are using it properly.

The information in this handout has been created and peer reviewed by graduate-level medical illustrators, followed by reviews from medical subject experts, either physicians or PhDs on the Nucleus Medical Review Board, to ensure medical accuracy and audience level appropriateness.

The handout is intended to supplement the information you receive from your healthcare provider and should never be considered personal medical advice. Always contact your healthcare provider with health questions and concerns.