

How to Use Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI) With a Spacer Device

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Prepared by: Pharmacy Department
Reviewed by: Respiriology Clinic
Designed and Managed by: Library Services

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Aussi disponible en français :
FF85-1374

- Store your MDI at room temperature. If it gets cold, warm it using **only** your hands. **Do not** use anything other than your hands to warm it.
- **Do not** puncture (make a hole in) or break the canister.
- Talk with your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner), pharmacist, respiratory therapist, nurse, or respiratory educator about your MDI. Show them how you are using it.
 - › If you are having trouble using your MDI, ask your health care provider for tips, or to suggest another device.

If you think your MDI is empty:

- **Do not** float the canister in water.
- Shake it. If it feels light, or if you do not feel liquid moving, it is empty.
- If your MDI has a counter, 0 (zero) means it is empty.

Examples of maintenance MDIs

- Long-acting bronchodilators with corticosteroid
 - › Advair
 - › Zenhale®
 - › Breztri™ Aerosphere®
- Inhaled corticosteroids
 - › Alvesco®
 - › Flovent
 - › Qvar RediHaler®

Examples of reliever or rescue MDIs

• Short-acting bronchodilators

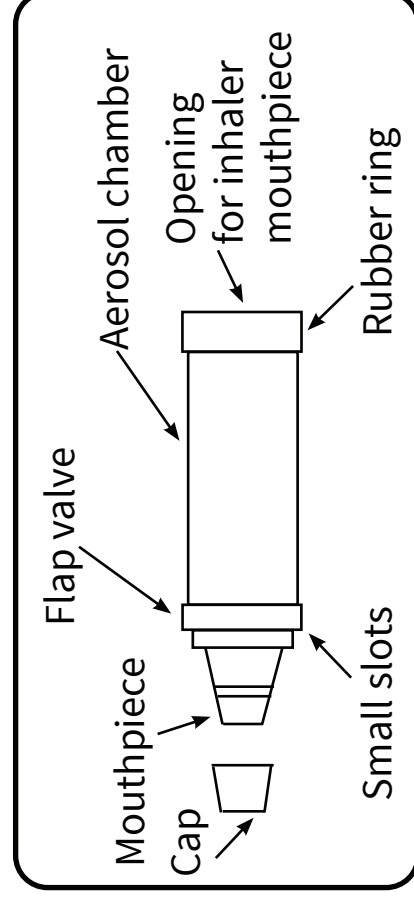
- › Airomir® (salbutamol)
- › Atrovent®
- › Ventolin (salbutamol)

Remember:

- Always follow the instructions that come with your MDI.
- Keep your reliever or rescue MDI somewhere where you can get it quickly if needed, but out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check the expiry date on your MDI before you use it.
- When you start using an MDI, write the start date on the canister.

How to Use Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI) With a Spacer Device

- A metered-dose inhaler (MDI) is filled with medication that is under pressure. When you press the top of the MDI, it pushes out medication for you to inhale (breathe in).
- **Always** use your MDI with a spacer device attachment. This device holds the medication in place and makes it easier to breathe in.
- You can buy a spacer device at most drugstores without a prescription. Some insurance plans cover the cost. If you can, compare the prices of spacers at different stores before buying.
- This pamphlet explains how to use and take care of your MDI and spacer device.



How to use your MDI with a spacer device

There are 2 ways to use your MDI with a spacer device.

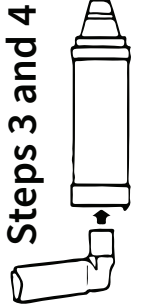
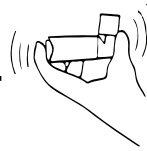
Method 1

- 1. Make sure that the metal canister of the MDI is firmly inside the plastic cover.
- 2. Shake the MDI well.
- 3. Take the plastic caps off of the MDI and the spacer device.

Step 1



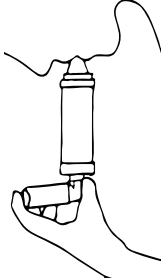
Step 2



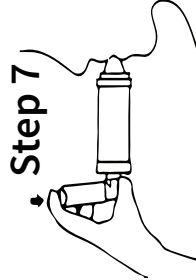
Steps 3 and 4

- 4. Place the mouthpiece of the MDI into the opening of the spacer device.
- 5. Breathe out normally.
- 6. Put the mouthpiece of the spacer device into your mouth and seal your lips around it.

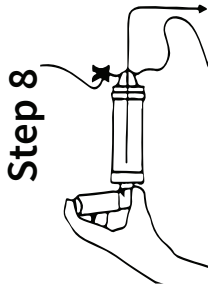
Steps 5 and 6



- 7. Press the MDI to spray the medication into the spacer device.
- 8. Take a slow, deep breath in over 5 seconds. Hold your breath for 10 seconds, if possible.



Step 7



Step 8

Tips for using your MDI

- Know when to use your maintenance MDI and when to use your reliever or rescue MDI.
- After using your maintenance MDI:
 - Rinse your mouth with water, gargle, and spit. Do not swallow.
- Carry your reliever or rescue MDI with you at all times.
- In cold weather, carry your MDI in a pocket close to your body.

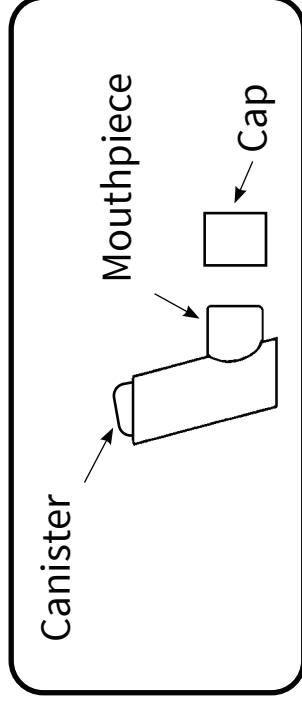
Start date of inhaler: _____

YYYY/MM/DD

My MDIs:

Name	Number of doses	How often?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

3. Let the plastic parts air dry (for example, leave them out overnight).
Do not use a cloth to dry them.
4. Put the MDI back together.
5. Test the MDI by releasing a dose into the air.



Cleaning your spacer device

- Once every 7 days (1 week), put all the parts of your spacer device in a sink or a large bowl of warm water with a mild dish soap.
- **Do not:**
 - › Put your spacer device in the dishwasher.
 - › Run tap water through it.
 - › Use a cloth or a brush to clean inside it.
 - › **Put the parts back together** until the spacer device is fully dry.
- Rinse your spacer device in a sink of clear water using a gentle motion.
- Let all parts air dry fully.

Note: Your spacer device may have a whistle to tell you that you are breathing in too fast. **If you are using the device properly, you should not hear the whistle.**

9. Take the spacer device out of your mouth and breathe out.

If you need more than one dose:

- Take only one dose at a time. Wait for 30 seconds between each dose. Then shake the MDI well, and repeat steps 4 to 9.

After using your MDI:

- **Rinse your mouth with water after using any maintenance MDI that contains a corticosteroid.**
- Put the caps back on your MDI and spacer device.
- Store your MDI at room temperature.
- Write down the number of doses you used.

Method 2: Rebreathing Method

Use this method if:

- › You cannot hold your breath.
- › You cannot take slow, deep breaths in.

Step 1

1. Make sure that the metal canister of the MDI is firmly inside the plastic cover.



Step 2

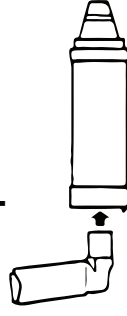
2. Shake the MDI well.



3. Take the plastic caps off of the MDI and the spacer device.

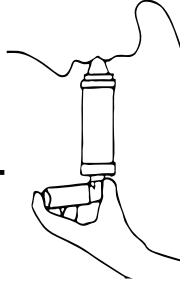
Steps 3 and 4

4. Place the mouthpiece of the MDI into the opening of the spacer device.



Steps 5 and 6

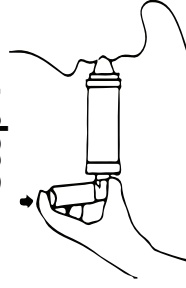
5. Put the mouthpiece of the spacer device into your mouth and seal your lips around it.



6. Breathe normally through the spacer device.

Step 7

7. Press the MDI to spray the medication into the spacer device. Breathe normally through the spacer device for 4 to 5 breaths. **Do not** take the device out of your mouth while breathing.



8. Take the spacer device out of your mouth and breathe out.

If you need more than one dose:

- Take only 1 dose at a time. Wait for 30 seconds between each dose. Then shake the MDI well, and repeat steps 4 to 7.

After using your MDI:

- **Rinse your mouth with water after using any maintenance MDI that contains a corticosteroid.**
- Put the caps back on your MDI and spacer device.
- Store your MDI at room temperature.
- Write down the number of doses you used.

If you need to use both hands to press the MDI:

- Press the MDI, then put the mouthpiece of the spacer device into your mouth and seal your lips around it. Then breathe in using Method 1 or Method 2.

Cleaning your MDI

To clean your MDI, follow the instructions that came with it. For most MDIs, you will:

1. Pull out the metal canister.
2. Clean the **plastic** parts using mild soap (like dish soap) and water. **Do not** wash the metal canister or put it in water.