

Using a spacer device for babies and young children



Information for parents/carers

Inhalers

The main treatment for wheezing is the use of inhaled medication. The most common types of inhaler that we use are:



Inhaled medicines allow delivery of treatment directly to the airways.

- Salbutamol works almost immediately, and the effects last for about four to six hours.
- Ipratropium bromide takes a little longer to work, about 30 minutes, but the effects will last for six to eight hours.

Why spacers are important?


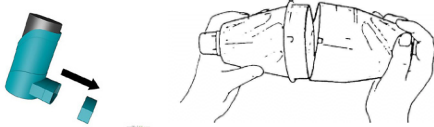
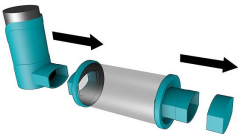

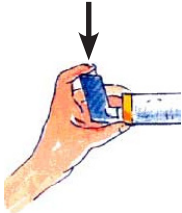


Using spacers is proven to be a very effective way of delivering inhaled medication. Spacers make it easier to deliver inhalers to children, and will get more of the medication into the lungs than using inhalers on their own. They reduce the amount of medication wasted by swallowing (therefore reducing side effects) and ineffective inhaler technique.

Before you are discharged from hospital a nurse will teach you how to give the inhaled medication via a spacer device, if it is required at home. These are the main types of spacer we use:



A spacer has a mouthpiece at one end and a hole for the inhaler at the other. Those with learning difficulties and poor co-ordination may find a mask easier to use than a mouthpiece. A mask may be fitted to the end of the spacer so they can breathe the medication in and out through their nose and mouth.

Step-by-step guide of how to use a spacer

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Shake inhaler well before use.</p> |  |
| <p>2. Remove cap from the inhaler and spacer if it has one. If your spacer is in three parts you will need to assemble it.</p> |  |
| <p>3. Place inhaler into spacer.</p> |  |
| <p>4. Bring spacer to your child's mouth and nose. You may find it easier to wrap your child in a blanket, or cradle them, keeping their arms out of the way. The mask needs to have a good seal around your child's nose and mouth.</p> |  |
| <p>5. Press the top of the inhaler once.</p> |  |
| <p>6. Keeping a good seal around your child's nose and mouth make sure they breathe in and out of the spacer four to five times, listening for the clicking noise explained by the nurse.</p> |  |
| <p>7. Shake inhaler between every puff. Your doctor or nurse will tell you how many puffs to give your child at home.</p> |  |

Inhaled medications are a vital part of treatment for many different breathing problems, but if they are not delivered effectively, they will not work as well as they should. Following the simple steps explained in this leaflet will ensure your child gets their medication effectively, so they can get better as quickly as possible.

Cleaning your spacer

You will need to wash your child's spacer once a month using washing-up liquid. Don't scrub the inside of the spacer as this affects the way it works. Leave it to air-dry as this helps to prevent the medicine sticking to the sides of the chamber and reduces the static. Wipe the mouthpiece clean before you use it again. Don't worry if your spacer looks cloudy - that doesn't mean it's dirty.

Your spacer should be replaced at least every year, especially if you use it daily, but some may need to be replaced sooner.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask your nurse or doctor or you can call ward 10 on 01493 452010

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
 - Polite, friendly and interested in people
 - Value and respect people as individuals
- So people feel welcome**

Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
 - Attentive, responsive & take time to help
 - Visible presence of staff to provide care
- So people feel cared for**

Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
 - Keep people clearly informed
 - Involve people
- So people feel in control**

Effective and professional

- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
 - Effective care / services from joined up teams
 - Organised and timely, looking to improve
- So people feel safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240

Author:
Saskia Van Branteghem, Staff Nurse
Children's and Young Persons' Unit

© October 2015
Revised January 2019
James Paget University Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust
Review Date: January 2022
CH 15 version 2