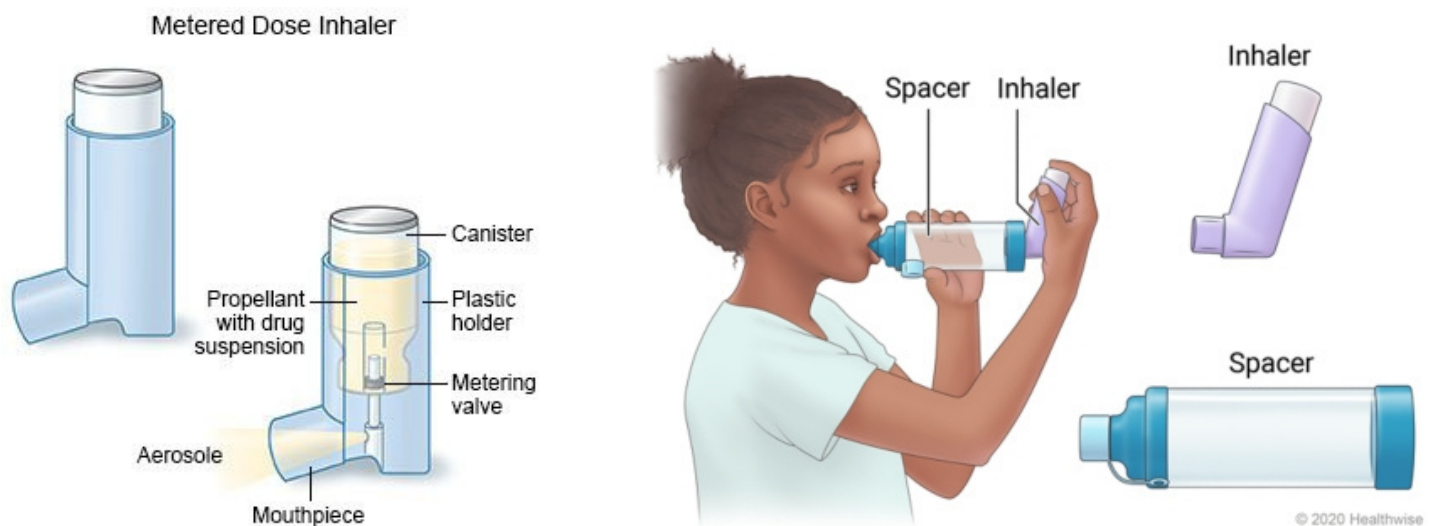


How to Use a Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI)

You have been prescribed an inhaled medication that is delivered through a metered dose inhaler, or MDI. Please follow these instructions when taking your medication.



Priming a MDI

Priming (spraying one or more puffs into the air before use) makes sure that the inhaler is ready to use and will spray the correct amount of medication. Priming may be different between medications, so it is important to read the patient instructions that come with the device. Prime the MDI if it is new, has not been used in 2 weeks, or as directed by the patient instructions.

- Remove the MDI cap and hold the device with your thumb at the bottom of the plastic holder and your middle or index finger on the top of the canister.
- Turn the mouthpiece away from you and press down on the canister once to spray one spray into the air.
- Repeat the shake and spray steps for a total of 3 to 4 sprays.

Techniques for Using a MDI

Use the technique that your health care provider has picked for you (check the box):

MDI with Chamber and mouthpiece - one breath:

- Remove the MDI cap and hold the device with your thumb at the bottom of the plastic holder and your middle or index finger on the top of the canister.
- Shake the MDI for 5 seconds.
- Place the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the chamber and remove the cap on the chamber mouthpiece.
- Take a deep breath in and then turn your head away and blow all the air out of your lungs.
- Place the mouthpiece of the chamber in your mouth between your teeth making sure that your tongue is below the mouthpiece and not in the way of the opening.
- Start breathing in slowly while you press down on the canister once and continue to breathe in slowly until your lungs are full.
- If you hear a musical sound while breathing in, you are breathing in too quickly or too hard. Slow your breath just enough to make the sound go away.
- Once you have filled your lungs completely, hold your breath for 5-10 seconds, and then let the air out slowly.
- Repeat all the steps as directed if you need a second dose
- When you are done taking the medication: rinse your mouth thoroughly with water and spit out the water. Do not swallow the water. This will decrease the risk of a mouth infection called thrush (candida infection).



MDI With a chamber and mouthpiece- 10 tidal breath breathing (6 yrs and older transitioning to one-breath technique and unable to take one breath and hold it):

- Remove the MDI cap and hold the device with your thumb at the bottom of the plastic holder and your middle or index finger on the top of the canister.
- Shake the MDI for 5 seconds.
- Place the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the chamber and remove the cap on the chamber mouthpiece.
- Take a deep breath in and then turn your head away and blow all the air out of your lungs.
- Place the mouthpiece of the chamber in your mouth between your teeth making sure that your tongue is below the mouthpiece and not in the way of the opening.
- Start breathing in slowly while you press down on the canister once and then continue breathing in and out slowly for ten breaths. Focus on taking deep breaths in. If you hear a musical sound while breathing in, you are breathing in too quickly or too hard. Slow your breathing just enough to make the sound go away.
- Repeat all the steps as directed if you need a second dose
- When you are done taking the medication: rinse your mouth thoroughly with water and spit out the water. Do not swallow the water. This will decrease the risk of a mouth infection called thrush (candida infection).



MDI With a chamber with a mask (child or adult):

- Remove the MDI cap and hold the device with your thumb at the bottom of the plastic holder and your middle or index finger on the top of the canister.
- Shake the MDI for 5 seconds.
- Place the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the chamber and mask and remove the cap on the chamber mouthpiece.
- Place the mask over your/your child's mouth and nose making sure that there is a good seal.
- Press down on the canister once and take/watch your child take 10 regular breaths in and out.
- Repeat all the steps as directed if you/your child needs a second dose
- When you/your child is done taking the medications: rinse your face and rinse your mouth thoroughly with water. Do not swallow the water. This will decrease the risk of a mouth infection called thrush (candida infection).



Caring for Your MDI and Chamber

MDI

For most MDIs, remove the canister and rinse the plastic holder with warm running water once a week to prevent the holes from getting clogged. Shake well and let air dry. Refer to the patient instructions that come with your inhaler.

Chamber

Clean the chamber about once a week. Remove the soft ring at the end of the chamber. Soak the spacer in warm water with a mild detergent. Carefully clean, rinse, and shake off excess water. Allow to completely air dry.

Resources

[American Thoracic Society](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics—Healthy Children—videos on how to use inhalers](#)

[Asthma and Allergy Network \(also available in Spanish\)](#)

[National Jewish Health - MDI](#)

[American Lung Association](#)

