

# PUFFER & SPACER

## USING YOUR INHALER



Using your inhaler (puffer) properly is important when you have asthma or COPD.

## ACHIEVING BETTER ASTHMA CONTROL

Many people do not realise they aren't using their asthma or COPD inhaler (puffer) correctly.

Although it might seem simple, it can be hard to get the steps just right without an expert showing you how. And if it's been a while since you were last shown, it's easy for little mistakes to slip into your routine.

Using your inhaler properly is important. With the right technique you can be sure that the dose prescribed by your doctor is the same as the dose received by your lungs.

Using your inhaler properly can give you better control of your asthma or COPD and may even mean you need to take less medication.

## GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR INHALER

It's a good idea to ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma & respiratory educator to explain how your inhaler should be used. They can check you are using your inhaler properly, tell you where to find the expiry date on your inhaler, show you how to check if your inhaler is empty or nearly empty, discuss any unwanted effects from your medication, and explain how to clean your inhaler and spacer (if you have one).

## COMMON PROBLEMS

- Not breathing in quickly enough after pressing the canister, so the medication falls to the bottom of the spacer
- Not breathing in deeply enough
- Not holding breath for long enough
- Taking several puffs without waiting or shaking the inhaler in between

## TIPS

- Looking after your spacer properly helps the medication get to your lungs better, as it doesn't stick to the sides or get clogged in the valve
- Using a spacer can help reduce the chance of side-effects like hoarse throat and thrush
- Ask your pharmacist about a facemask if your child can't seal their lips around the spacer mouthpiece properly

Check you have the steps right by watching a short video showing how to use a puffer and spacer correctly on our website: [www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au)

## CHECKLIST OF STEPS

1. Assemble spacer
2. Remove inhaler cap
3. Hold inhaler upright and shake well
4. Insert inhaler upright into spacer
5. Put mouthpiece between teeth without biting and close lips to form good seal
6. Breathe out gently
7. Hold spacer level and press down firmly on canister once
8. Breathe in slowly and deeply
9. Hold breath for about 5 seconds or as long as comfortable
10. While holding breath, remove spacer from mouth
11. Breathe out gently away from mouthpiece
12. Remove inhaler from spacer
13. If an extra dose is needed, wait 1 minute and then repeat steps 3 to 12
14. Replace cap and disassemble spacer

*Your inhaler and spacer will come with instructions in the package. Always check the package insert for any specific instructions.*