



Your partners  
in asthma management

# METERED DOSE INHALER

## How to Use Your Metered Dose Inhaler with Holding Chamber and a Mask

### What is a Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI)?

A MDI, or inhaler, is a device that contains asthma medicine. It delivers the medicine into the lungs. The MDI needs to be used in a certain way, or it will not work.

### What is a spacer?

A spacer is a plastic tube that connects to the MDI. The spacer helps more of the medicine get into the child's lungs.

If your child uses the MDI without a spacer, a lot of the asthma medicine can stick to the tongue and throat instead of going to the lungs, wasting the medicine and decreasing its effectiveness.



### How should I instruct my child to use a MDI with spacer and mask?

1. Wash your hands well.
2. Have your child sit up straight or stand to use a MDI.
3. Remove the cap from the inhaler.
4. Shake the inhaler well before using it each time. If it is a new inhaler or has not been used in several days, follow the manufacturer instructions for priming the inhaler.
5. Attach the inhaler to the spacer.
6. Cover your child's mouth and nose with the mask. If your child fights the mask, have another person gently hold his or her arms.
7. Press the inhaler to spray the medicine into the spacer.
8. Keep the mask in place until your child takes 5-6 breaths. If counting breaths is a problem, slowly count to 10. Give one puff at a time. Some chambers have a flap on the mask that moves with each breath and ensures that there is a good seal.
9. Remove the mask. If your provider has told you to give more than one puff, wait at least one minute between puffs. Shake the MDI before each puff and repeat steps 6-8.

### More tips

- Give praise and rewards.
- Use teddy bears or dolls who pretend to use the chamber to make it look like a game.
- If possible, give treatments when your child is happy and not crying.
- Have your child rinse his or her mouth out with water or brush his teeth if the medicine was a corticosteroid, such as QVAR or Flovent. This step is not necessary with the use of albuterol.
- For cleaning, take apart and wash your child's spacer and mask with mild dish soap and water weekly. Allow to air dry. DO NOT dry with a cloth.

(For viewing of proper technique, please refer to directional videos on our website's asthma link.)

