

Small Volume Spacers with or without a Mask



Women's &
Children's
Health Service

A Spacer holds the spray from a puffer until your child has breathed it all into their lungs. Everyone should use a spacer with their puffers, as it helps to get more of the medicine down into the lungs.

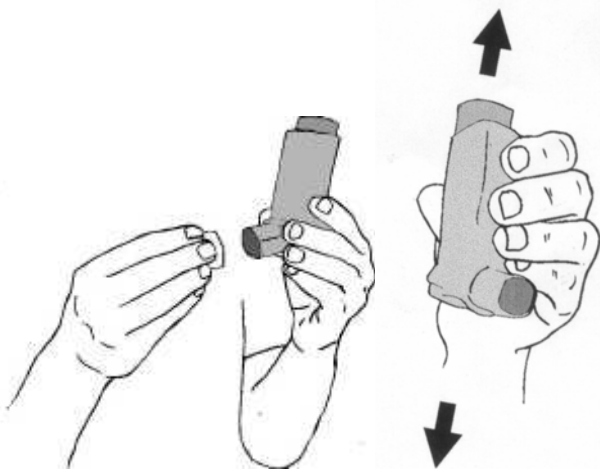
Children under 3 years of age need to use a spacer with a mask.

Many children by age 3 – 4 years can start using their spacer without a mask. This will get even more medicine down into the lungs.



How to use a spacer and mask

1 Take the cap off the inhaler. Hold the puffer up straight and shake well.



2 Place the mouthpiece of the inhaler into the end of the spacer.



3 Gently place mask over mouth and nose so that they are covered well with no gaps around the edges. For children over 3 years, place the mouthpiece between your child's teeth with lips closed firmly around it.



4 Press down on the inhaler once and wait for your child to take 5 deep breaths (watch their tummy as they breath in and out). Encourage mouth breathing which will increase medication delivery to the lungs.



5 If a second dose is needed repeat steps 1-4.

Never spray any more than one puff of the medication into the spacer at any time. More medication will get into your' child's lungs by doing one puff at a time.

How should you look after a spacer?

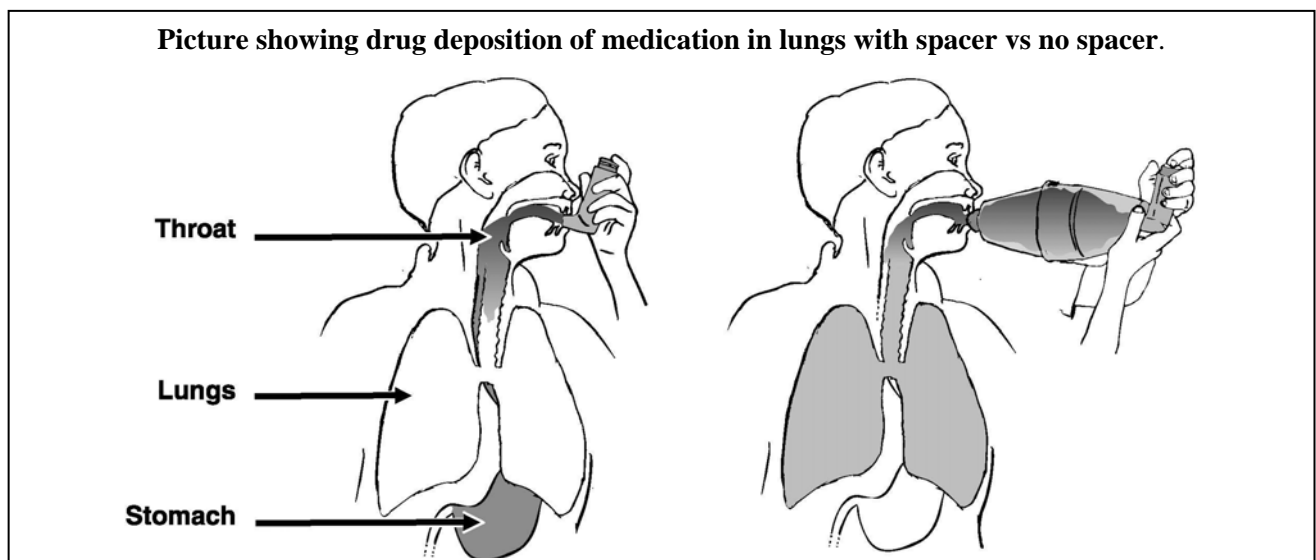
Static electricity builds up inside a spacer. This makes the medication stick to the inside of the spacer, so your child won't get as much medicine down into their lungs.

To get rid of the static, spacers should be washed when they are first bought, and then once every week:

- Take the pieces of the spacer apart and soak in warm soapy water for a few minutes. Dish washing liquid is best.
- Leave to drip dry **without** rinsing the soapy water off. Never rub dry, as this creates more static.
- The soap will create a thin layer on the inside walls of the spacer, which will help to stop static building up.
- Do not keep in a plastic bag, as this also increases static.

Why use a spacer?

- It gets more of the medication down into the lungs, so the medicine will work better.



- Spacers can work just as well as a nebuliser, and they are cheaper and easier to carry around. So most children will not need a nebuliser at home.
- Less of the medicine gets stuck in the mouth and throat when a spacer is used. This helps to cut down the risk of side effects in the mouth and throat such as thrush, hoarse voice and a sore throat from using steroid preventers.

This asthma delivery device sheet has been developed by the Asthma Foundation of WA and Asthma Liaison Nurses for Princess Margaret Hospital for Children

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