

Are You Using Your Inhalers Correctly?

About half of all patients don't use their inhalers correctly. Improving the way you use your inhaler will help your lungs get the right dose of medicine to help with your symptoms.



CONTROLLER inhalers prevent symptoms and should be used every day. Your controller inhaler(s) are:

RESCUE inhalers are used as needed, when you have new or worsening shortness of breath. Your rescue inhaler is:

The correct way to use your inhaler depends on the type of devices you may have. Please visit the COPD Foundation at <http://bit.ly/InhalerVideos> to find videos demonstrating inhaler use. These videos will show you the best way to use your specific inhaler device(s).

My medication name	My device name
Example: <i>albuterol</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HFA with spacer
Metered Dose Inhalers (MDI): Requires coordination with taking dose and breathing in (slow deep breath). Should be used with a spacer to make the inhaler easier to use. Prime before first use. Shake inhaler prior to use.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> HFA with spacer
	<input type="checkbox"/> HFA with no spacer
	<input type="checkbox"/> Redihaler
Dry Powder Inhalers (DPI): Requires less coordination with breath. Must breathe in quickly and deeply. Do not prime before first use. Do not shake.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Diskus
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ellipta
	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexhaler
	<input type="checkbox"/> Handihaler
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inhub
	<input type="checkbox"/> Neohaler
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pressair
	<input type="checkbox"/> Respiclick
	<input type="checkbox"/> Twisthaler
Soft Mist Inhaler (SMI): Requires no coordination with breath. It may be difficult for some to use the device (loading canister, turning device). Prime before first use. Do not shake.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Respimat

Inhaler Tips

- 1 Make sure you have enough medicine in your inhaler.** Most inhalers have counters to keep track of how many doses are left. If your inhaler does not have a counter, keep track of how many doses you have used.
- 2 Don't remove inhalers from original packaging until you need them.** Some expire a few weeks or months after removal from the foil pouch. Ask your pharmacist if you need help understanding the expiration date.
- 3 Order refills of your inhalers on time.** Don't wait until the last minute to reorder your inhaler. Give yourself enough time so you don't go without these important medicines.

Where Can I Get Help Paying for My Inhalers?

www.needymeds.org: Search for your inhaler to find coupons (commercial insurance only) and manufacturer assistance programs.

www.vermont4a.org: If you are 65 years or older, find a local Area Agency on Aging for assistance with selecting a Medicare Part D insurance plan.

Stay Up to Date on Vaccines

Each year, thousands of adults get sick from infections that could be prevented by a vaccine. Ask your primary care provider to make sure you have all your recommended vaccines, including:

- Flu shot – every year
- Pneumonia
- Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough)
- Shingles (age 50 years and older)



Quitting Smoking is the #1 way to help you breathe better and live longer. When you are ready to quit, talk to your primary care provider about creating a successful plan to help you:

- Set a quit date
- Get the support of family and friends
- Use medications to help you quit.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit www.802QUITS.org for support and access to medications to help you quit



The University of Vermont
LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
OFFICE OF PRIMARY CARE

This handout may be freely downloaded from *The Vermont Academic Detailing Program* website: www.vtad.org
SEPTEMBER 2020