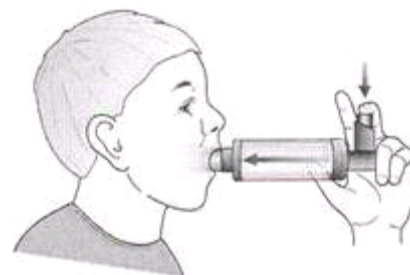


Spacers - Information for patients, parents & carers

This leaflet will help you understand a spacer device, the benefits of using one, how to clean it and when to replace it.



What is a spacer?

A spacer is a plastic chamber, which helps to deliver medicine to the lungs. When inhalers and spacers are used together they make the medicine more effective.

An **Aerochamber Plus** is a small, colourful spacer. The orange and yellow ones have a mask. The flap in the mask should move when you breathe in and out. If it doesn't, re-position the mask to create a seal around the nose and mouth. When using the blue aerochamber with a mouthpiece, if you are breathing in correctly you should **not** hear a musical note.

A **Volumatic** is a large, clear spacer and comes in two parts, which must be put together before use. Children under 3 years will need the mask to be attached onto the mouthpiece. Older children and adults using the mouthpiece should make the valve click each time they breathe in and out.

Different inhalers may need different spacer devices, so please ensure that your inhaler is compatible with your spacer. If your inhaler doesn't fit the spacer, please check with the Practice Respiratory nurse to ensure that you have the correct spacer.

Why spacers are important?

Spacers are very important because:

- They make the treatment more effective
- They reduce problems with co-ordination and inhaler technique.
- If you are prescribed a steroid inhaler, spacers help to reduce the risk of oral thrush by reducing the number of large droplets of medication that reach the mouth. The risk of oral thrush can be further reduced by cleaning your teeth or wiping your face if using a spacer with a mask afterwards.

How to look after your spacer

Spacers should be cleaned at least once a month; otherwise their performance is adversely affected. They should be washed in warm, soapy water and allowed to dry naturally in the air. The mouthpiece should be wiped clean of any detergent or residue before use.

Plastic spacers should be replaced at least every 12 months but some may need changing at six months – talk to your doctor or if you have concerns, especially if you are due an annual review.

<https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/clinical-information/asthma/btssign-asthma-guideline-2014/>

<http://cks.nice.org.uk/asthma#!scenario>

