

## Looking after the spacer

- Wash it once a month in warm, soapy water and leave it to air dry.
- Spacers usually need replacing every 6-12 months.

## Remember

- After giving your child their preventer inhaler, clean their teeth and rinse their mouth.
- Only put one puff of medicine into the spacer at a time. When you use more than one puff, the droplets of spray stick together and coat the sides of the spacer. This means your child gets less medicine.
- If you are having trouble getting your child to use the spacer, see your nurse for help and friendly advice.

## Who provides this service?

The Children's Asthma Service is provided by Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO). MLCO is the organisation that provides NHS community health and adult social care services in the city.

**Find out more about MLCO at**  
**[www.manchesterlco.org](http://www.manchesterlco.org)**

## Where to get more information?

### Children's Asthma Nursing Service

- **Telephone:** 0161 529 6638
- **Website:**  
[www.manchesterlco.org/childrens-asthma-service](http://www.manchesterlco.org/childrens-asthma-service)

### Asthma UK Adviceline

- **Telephone:** 0300 222 5800
- **Website:** [www.asthmaandlung.org.uk](http://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk)

### Allergy UK

- **Telephone:** 0300 222 5800
- **Website:** [www.asthmaandlung.org.uk](http://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk)

## Other languages

This leaflet can be produced in other languages or formats on request. Please contact us if you require help.

## Compliments and complaints

If you have any suggestions, comments, compliments or concerns about the services you have received, the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service** (PALS) team are here to help. You can contact the team by email at [pals@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@mft.nhs.uk) or by calling them on **0161 276 8686**.

# Using a spacer

## Patient and carer information

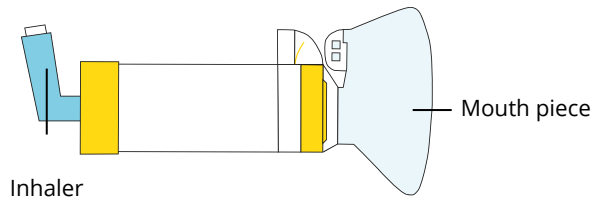
### Children's Asthma Service



## About asthma and spacers

A spacer is a container, with a mouthpiece or mask at one end and a hole at the other. The aerosol inhaler fits into the hole.

To use the spacer, you fit the inhaler into the end opposite the mouthpiece or mask. Then, spray the inhaler and breathe in the medicine through the mouthpiece or mask.



*An example of a spacer device*

## Why spacers are important

Spacers are important because they:

- Make aerosol inhalers easier to use and more effective
- Help your child get more medicine into their lungs
- Are compact and convenient
- Work as well as nebulisers in acute asthma attacks

**Children should not use aerosol inhalers without a spacer.** Spacers with masks are for babies and very young children.

Once your child reaches five years, they will learn to use a spacer without a mask.

## Using a spacer with a mask

1. Shake the inhaler well.
2. Fit the inhaler into the end of the spacer.
3. Place the mask over your baby's face so that it seals around the nose and mouth, tilting the spacer slightly upwards.
4. Press the inhaler once and allow your baby to breathe it in slowly for a count of ten.
5. Remove the spacer.

Repeat these steps for each puff.

Your doctor or nurse will tell you how many puffs are needed.

You can visit the following link to check your child's inhaler technique:

[www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/living-with/inhaler-videos](http://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/living-with/inhaler-videos)

## Using a spacer with a mouthpiece

1. Shake the inhaler well.
2. Fit the inhaler into the end of the spacer.
3. Place the mouthpiece in your child's mouth ensuring their lips seal around it.
4. Press the inhaler once and allow your child to take five normal breaths in and out.
5. Remove the spacer.

Repeat these steps for each puff.

Your doctor or nurse will tell you how many puffs are needed.

## Tips on using a spacer

Turn the spacer into a toy – decorate it with coloured stickers. You could also make it into a counting game! Have a routine – set a time of day when your child takes their inhaler. Remember to give lots of praise when they do it correctly!

Cuddle or cradle your baby if they are using a spacer and be positive and smile. If you are having problems using the spacer, try giving it to your baby when they are asleep, or ask for help.