

# TOP 10

## INHALER MISTAKES

Inhaled asthma medicine needs to reach the airways to work.

Here are 10 common mistakes made when using a metered-dose inhaler (MDI) and how to correct them.



### 1 SITTING DOWN

**FIX IT:** Standing allows the lungs to fully inhale and provides more power to exhale.

### 2 USING AN EMPTY INHALER

**FIX IT:** Request a refill when the inhaler is half full so you never run out.

### 3 NOT SHAKING OR PRIMING THE INHALER

**FIX IT:** Shake the inhaler canister 10 to 15 times for the medication to be ready to work. When using a new inhaler, prime it by releasing three to four test sprays. Prime again if not used for several weeks.



### 4 NOT USING A SPACER WITH AN MDI INHALER

**FIX IT:** A spacer helps deliver the medication to the airways instead of the mouth. Insert the inhaler into the spacer. Spray one puff of medicine and inhale slowly. Hold your breath for a count of 10 and exhale slowly.



### 5 HOLDING THE HEAD TOO FAR FORWARD OR BACKWARD

**FIX IT:** The head needs to be in a normal position, not too far back or too far forward, to help make a direct path for the medicine to reach the airways.

### 6 TONGUE OR TEETH IN THE WAY OF SPACER/INHALER OPENING

**FIX IT:** Put the spacer/inhaler in the mouth above the tongue, under the top teeth.



### 7 MOUTH NOT TIGHT ENOUGH AROUND SPACER/INHALER

**FIX IT:** Close the lips around the spacer so air does not escape.



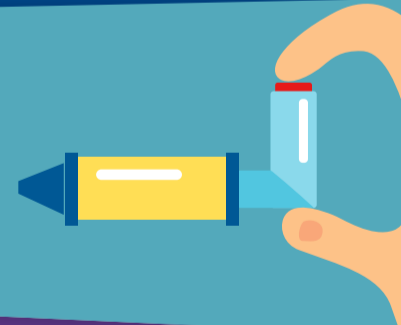
### 8 DIRECTING SPACER/INHALER AT TONGUE OR ROOF OF MOUTH

**FIX IT:** Aim the spacer/inhaler at the back of the throat, so the medicine reaches the lungs.



### 9 SPRAYING SEVERAL PUFFS OF INHALER INTO SPACER

**FIX IT:** Spray only one puff of the inhaler at a time into the spacer. Breathe out before inhaling. Hold breath for a count of 10, then exhale.



### 10 INHALING MEDICINE TOO FAST

**FIX IT:** Inhale slowly. A whistle from the spacer means the inhalation is too fast.



#### REMINDERS

- Follow instructions for using your inhaler.
- Gargle and spit after inhaling a steroid.
- Show your inhaler technique to your provider.
- Clean the inhaler and spacer according to instructions.

#### ASTHMA FACTS

- 6.3 million children have asthma.
- Leading chronic disease among children.
- 1 out of 10 school-aged children have asthma.
- Top cause of missed school days.