How to use a spacer

Spacer devices are used with pressurised meter dose inhalers (MDIs.) There are various types - an example is shown opposite of one of the spacers that Complex Care prescribe. The spacer between the inhaler and the mouth holds the medicine like a reservoir when the inhaler is pressed. A valve at the mouth end ensures that the medicine is kept within the spacer until the client breathes in. When they breathe out, the valve closes.

Cleaning instructions differ depending on the spacer being used. Please check the box to ensure that the spacer is cared for appropriately as replaced in a timely manner.

For those who can use a spacer without help

1. Take off the cap and shake the inhaler
2. Put the inhaler into the end of your spacer
3. Breathe out gently as long as comfortable
4. Put the mouthpiece between your teeth and lips, making a seal so no medicine can escape
5. Press the canister to put one puff of your medicine into the spacer
6. Breathe in slowly and steadily (not hard and fast) through the mouthpiece
7. Remove the spacer from your mouth and hold your breath for 10 seconds (or for as long as is comfortable) then breathe out slowly
8. If you need a second dose, wait 30 seconds, remove the inhaler, shake it and repeat the steps above.

   OR, if you find it hard to hold your breath, carry out steps 1 to 6 as above, then:
7. Keep the spacer in your mouth with your lips sealed around it and breathe in and out of the mouthpiece five times.
8. If you need a second dose, wait 30 seconds, remove the inhaler, shake it and repeat the steps above.

For those who need help using their spacer

1. Explain to your service user what's going to happen and what they need to do.
2. Remove the cap and shake the inhaler.
3. Put the inhaler into the end of the spacer.
4. Place the mouthpiece between the teeth and lips, making a seal so no medicine can escape.
5. Encourage your service user to breath in and out slowly and gently.
6. Once breathing pattern is well established press the canister once to put one puff of the inhaler medicine into the spacer.
7. Get them to breathe in and out of the mouthpiece five times

8. Repeat from step 2 for each puff of the inhaler needed, remembering to take out the inhaler and shake it before each puff.

How to use a spacer with a mask

For those who can use a spacer and mask without help

1. Take off the cap and shake the inhaler.
2. Put the inhaler into the end of your spacer.
3. Breathe out gently as long as comfortable.
4. Place the mask over your mouth & nose making a seal so no medicine can escape.
5. Press the canister to put one puff of your medicine into the spacer.
6. Breathe in slowly and steadily (not hard and fast) through the mask.
7. Keep the mask over your mouth & nose and breathe in and out through the spacer five times .
8. If you need a second dose, wait 30 seconds, remove the inhaler, shake it and repeat the steps above.
9. If the inhaler that you have just used contains a steroid, remember to wash your

face after treatment to remove any residue from the skin.

For those who need help using their spacer and mask

1. Explain to your service user what's going to happen and what they need to do
2. Remove the cap and shake the inhaler
3. Put the inhaler into the end of the spacer
4. Place the mask over the mouth & nose making a seal so no medicine can escape. To avoid damage to delicate skin place yourself on the same level as the patient to ensure you use minimum pressure against the skin.
5. Encourage your service user to breath in and out slowly and gently
6. Once breathing pattern is well established press the canister once to put one puff of the inhaler medicine into the spacer
7. Get them to breathe in and out of the mouthpiece five times
8. Repeat from step 2 for each puff of the inhaler needed, remembering to take out the inhaler and shake it before each puff
9. If the inhaler that you have just used contains a steroid, remember to wash your face after treatment to remove any residue from the skin