



Better Asthma Control for Kids

BACK 1:1 Inhaler Technique Lesson Plan

Topic: Individual inhaler technique

Objective: By the end of this lesson, children will be able to:

- Demonstrate correct inhaler use, with or without a spacer.
- Recognize the difference between a controller inhaler and a rescue inhaler.
- Explain why using the inhaler correctly helps their breathing.

Teaching Aids:

- Demo inhaler
- Spacer devices, with or without mask (if applicable)
- Inhaler Device Assessment Tool (IDAT)
- Medicine traveling to the lungs visual
- Inhaler technique 1 pagers
- Sand timer or countdown method (optional)

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Suggestions for Use:

- Use at the beginning of the year to teach initial inhaler technique, then revisit periodically to ensure proper technique is maintained.
- Visual tools (matching cards, posters, demonstrations) can be utilized as school nurses or health aides see fit.
- Fit for elementary school-aged students

Procedure:

1. Assess Current Inhaler Technique (2-3 minutes)

- Ask the child if they can show you how they use their inhaler
- Observe without correcting first to identify habits or gaps using the IDAT

2. Explanation (3-5 minutes)

“Your inhaler gives you medicine that helps open your airways so you can breathe more easily. But for it to work right, the medicine must get all the way down into your lungs – not just your mouth.”

- Use the lung diagram to show where the medicine should be traveling



Better Asthma Control for Kids

3. Demonstration of Proper Technique (5-7 minutes)

Using a demo inhaler, show each step slowly and clearly:

- Inhaler
 - Shake inhaler well.
 - Exhale fully.
 - Place mouthpiece in mouth, seal lips tightly.
 - Press the inhaler once and breathe in deeply.
 - Hold breath for about 10 seconds.
 - Breathe out slowly.
 - Wait 1 minute before administering a second puff.

- With Spacer
 - Attach Spacer
 - Shake inhaler well
 - Breathe out gently
 - Place mouthpiece in mouth, seal lips tightly.
 - Press the inhaler once and breathe in gradually (not too fast)
 - Hold breath for about 10 seconds.
 - Breathe out slowly.
 - Wait 1 minute before administering a second puff.

- Spacer with mask additional items
 - Demonstrate how to keep the mask snug over the nose and mouth
 - Show taking slow, normal breaths (5-6 breaths)

4. Guided Practice (5 minutes)

- Allow each child to practice using an empty demo inhaler – you can sanitize and reuse the same inhaler using sanitary wipes
- Gently correct commonly skipped steps as you walk through it (e.g., inhaling too fast, forgetting to exhale first, not holding breath long enough)

Try using supportive language for more forgetful kids:

- “Let’s try slowing that breath down together.”
- “Try breathing out first – that helps make room for the medicine.”
- “Does it feel like the medicine hit the back of your throat?”



Better Asthma Control for Kids

5. Reinforcement & Understanding (5 minutes)

Inhaler Types: show and briefly discuss the two different inhaler types

** This step is more specific to kiddos that have controller inhalers, though the information can be applicable to any child with asthma.

Controller inhaler:

- Keeps your lungs healthy every day
- Controller is used every day, even when feeling good

Rescue inhaler:

- Helps right away when breathing feels tight
- Used when coughing, wheezing, or short of breath

Questions to ask:

“Which inhaler helps every day?”

“Which one helps when breathing gets hard?”

Why Technique Matters

Ask: “Why do we need to use our inhaler the right way?”

Reinforce: “So the medicine reaches the lungs, not just the mouth.”

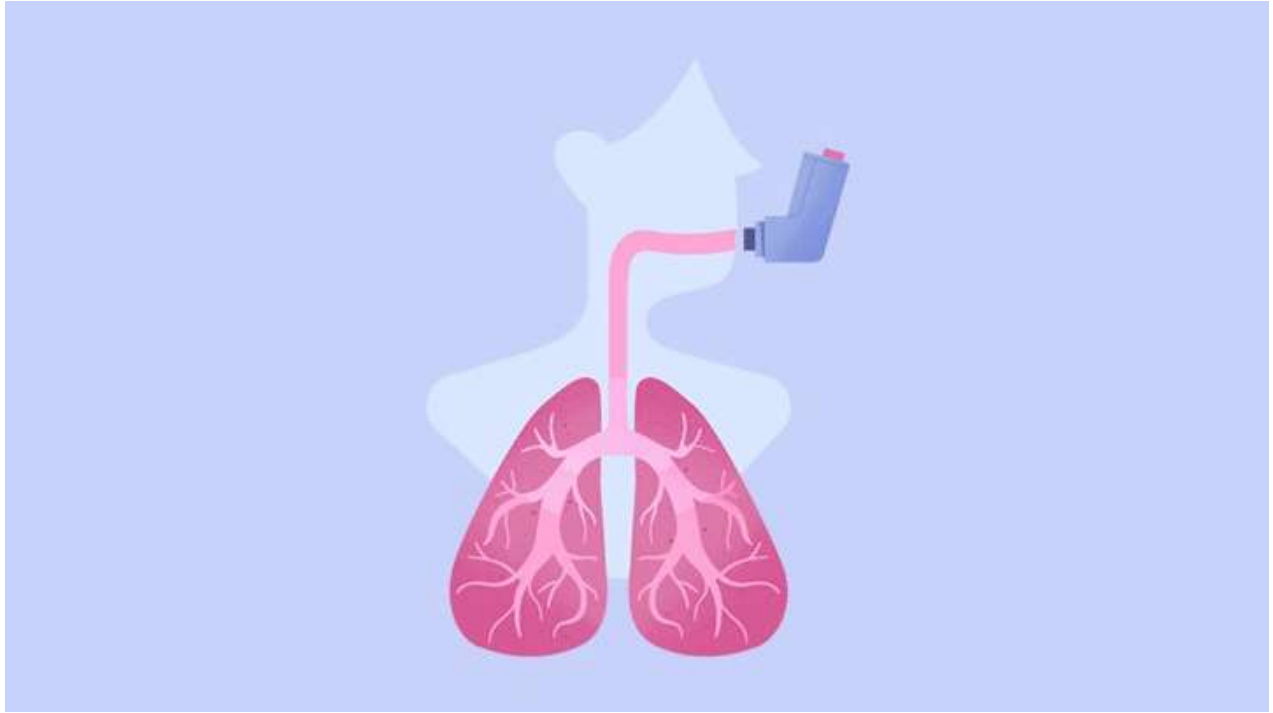
Review & Close (2 minutes)

- Ask each child to recount one helpful step they remember
- Show visual differences between controller and rescue inhalers (color, label, purpose)
- If there is additional time leftover ... Have the child arrange inhaler technique flash cards in the correct order

End with encouragement, praise their effort: “You did great - using your inhaler right means your lungs stay strong!”



Better Asthma Control for Kids



Inhaler Device Assessment Tool - Form A1: MDI

Type of inhalation device (**Check one**): MDI MDI plus spacer MDI plus spacer with mask

Instructions. Give one point for each step performed correctly (1=Yes, correct technique). Provide a reason for why a step was not done correctly for steps with a Score of 0.

When using this checklist as a teaching guide: For boxes with a score of 0, provide more teaching or coaching in these areas until a total score of 5 is obtained. Record the number of attempts until a satisfactory technique is obtained in the column "Coaching."

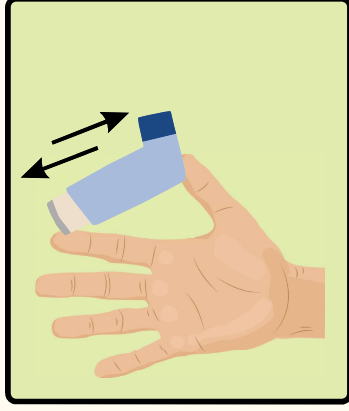
Sequence of Critical Steps & Criteria	Score		Coaching
	1	0	
<p>1 Removes cap.</p> <p><i>Score 1 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MDI: Removes cap from the mouthpiece. ✓ MDI plus spacer: Removes cap(s), AND inserts canister into spacer correctly. ✓ MDI plus spacer with mask: Removes cap(s), inserts canister mouthpiece into spacer. <p><i>Score 0 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Forget to remove cap(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Metal canister of MDI not in plastic mouthpiece correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 	1	0	
<p>2 Correctly primes device.</p> <p><i>Score 1 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MDI: Shakes the inhaler AND inhaler is upright ✓ MDI plus spacer with mask: Shakes and delivers only 1 spray in the chamber, after on face with a good seal. <p><i>Score 0 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Forget to shake. <input type="checkbox"/> Device held incorrectly (e.g., upside down). <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 	1	0	
<p>3 Exhales.</p> <p><i>Score 1 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exhales completely or breathes out to the end of a normal breath before putting apparatus to mouth. ✓ MDI plus spacer: Hear a hissing sound. ✓ MDI plus spacer with mask: Good fit of mask (nose and mouth covered). <p><i>Score 0 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not exhale fully. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 	1	0	
<p>4 Inhales appropriately for device.</p> <p><i>Score 1 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MDI: Positioned 2-3 finger widths away from widely opened mouth. At the same time starts to breathe in slowly and depresses the inhaler to release 1 puff of medication. Continues breathing in slowly for about 5 seconds. Position with chin up. ✓ MDI plus spacer: Puts the mouthpiece of spacer in the mouth, lips closed tightly around it, presses the inhaler. Breathes in slowly and deeply through the mouth for about 5 seconds. ✓ MDI plus spacer with mask: Good seal over nose and mouth, press the inhaler, slow tidal breathing (that is, regular breathing in and out). <p><i>Score 0 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Head not correctly positioned. <input type="checkbox"/> Block spray with teeth or tongue. <input type="checkbox"/> Blue or yellow Aerochamber: Hear a musical sound or whistling; breathing in too quickly. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not synchronize breathing in with puff (MDI alone). <input type="checkbox"/> Inhales through nose. <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering 2 sprays at once in the chamber for 1 inhalation. <input type="checkbox"/> Cough provoked by inhalation. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 	1	0	
<p>5 Holds breath.</p> <p><i>Score 1 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Person holds breath to count of 10 seconds. ✓ Lips kept closed while holding breath. ✓ MDI plus spacer with mask: No breath hold (see tidal breathing above) ✓ Person waits 30-60 seconds before repeating process <p><i>Score 0 if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Holds breath for less than 10 seconds. <input type="checkbox"/> MDI plus spacer with mask: Holds breath in and out less than 6 times per dose of medication. (child <6 years) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 	1	0	
<p>Date: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">dd/mm/yyyy</p>			
TOTAL SCORE			

BREATHHE OUT



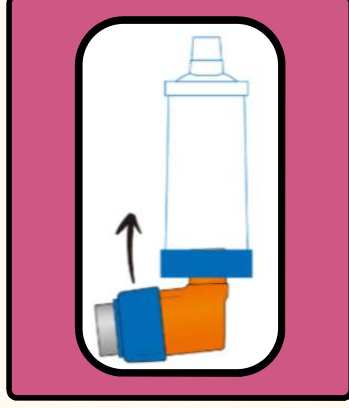
Remove the caps and make sure there is nothing on the mouthpieces of the spacer or inhaler.

SHAKE INHALER



Shake the inhaler 10–15 times to mix the medicine.

INSERT INHALER INTO SPACER



Put inhaler into spacer.

REMOVE CAPS



Place the mouthpiece between your teeth and lips to form a tight seal.

HOLD YOUR BREATH



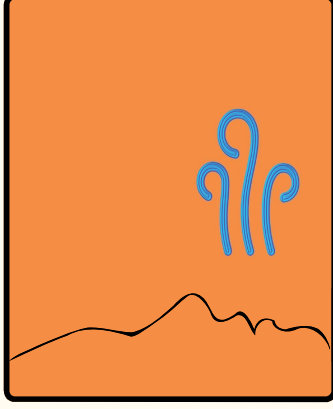
Take the spacer out of your mouth and **hold** your breath for 10 seconds.

EXHALE SLOWLY



Once again, **breathe out** away from the device. If you take another puff, wait 1–2 minutes.

BREATHHE OUT



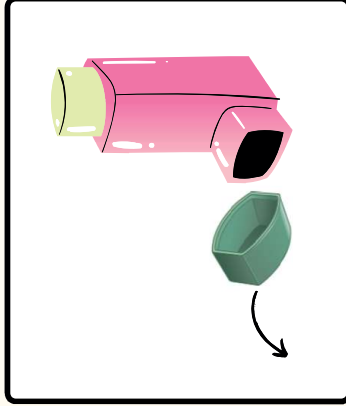
Exhale. Turn head away from the device and breathe out fully.

HOLD YOUR BREATH



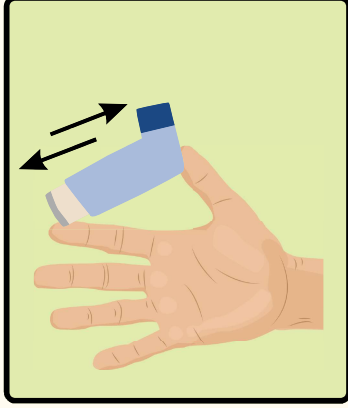
As you **press down** on the inhaler once, **breathe** in slowly.

REMOVE CAP



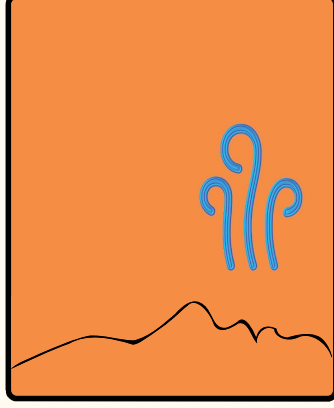
Remove the cap and make sure there is nothing on the mouthpiece of the inhaler.

SHAKE INHALER



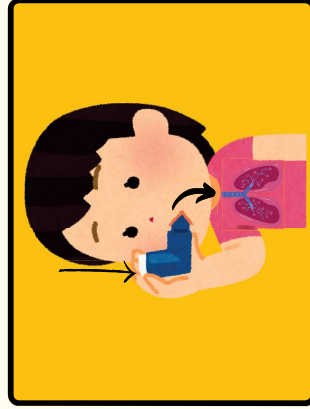
Shake the inhaler 10-15 times to mix the medicine .

BREATHE OUT



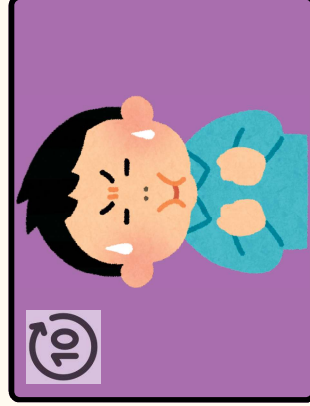
Exhale. Turn head away from the device and breathe out fully.

BREATHE IN SLOWLY



As you start to **breathe** in slowly, **press down** inhaler once and breathe in for 3-5 seconds.

HOLD YOUR BREATH



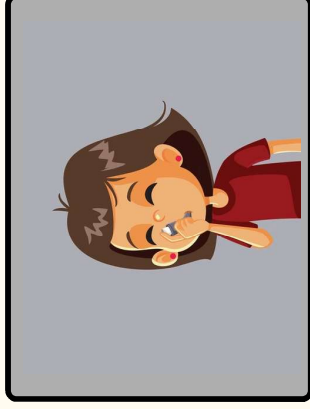
Take the inhaler out of your mouth and **hold** your breath for 10 seconds.

EXHALE SLOWLY



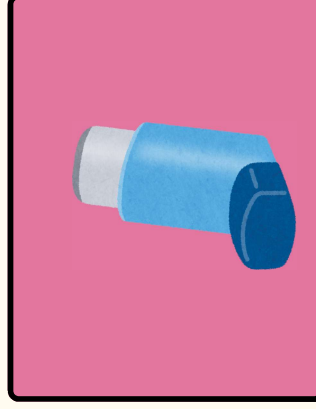
Once again, **breathe out** away from the device. If you take another puff, wait 1-2 minutes.

CLOSE MOUTH AROUND INHALER



Place the mouthpiece between your teeth and lips to form a tight seal.

PUT CAP BACK ON



Place the cap back on the mouthpiece and make sure it is closed tightly. You're all done!