

How to use your HandiHaler inhaler

Inhalers are commonly prescribed for patients with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) as they are very effective at delivering the medication straight to the lungs where it is needed.

Using your inhalers correctly is an important part of asthma or COPD treatment. You should be shown how to use inhalers properly by a healthcare professional when they are first prescribed.



You may occasionally experience problems using your inhalers, especially if it has been a while since you were shown the correct technique. This is very common and your healthcare professional can help you improve your inhaler technique.

Why is inhaler technique important?

- It allows the correct dose of medication to reach your lungs.
- It gives you better control of your condition.

Checklist for Spiriva HandiHaler use

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| 1 | Stand or sit upright when using your HandiHaler. |
| 2 | Open the dust cap by pressing the piercing button. |
| 3 | Open the mouthpiece by pulling it upwards. |
| 4 | Remove a capsule from the blister and put it in the chamber. |
| 5 | Close the mouthpiece until you hear it click. |
| 6 | Press and release the green piercing button once only. |
| 7 | Breathe out fully. |
| 8 | Place the mouthpiece between your teeth without biting and form a good seal around it with your lips |
| 9 | Breathe in through your mouth so the capsule vibrates. |
| 10 | Breathe in slowly and deeply until your lungs are full. |
| 11 | Hold your breath and remove the HandiHaler from your mouth. |
| 12 | Continue to hold your breath for 10 seconds or as long as it is comfortable. Breathe out slowly. |
| 13 | Repeat steps 7 to 12 once again to empty the capsule. |
| 14 | Open the mouthpiece again and dispose of the used capsule. |

Common problems

Common mistakes that people make with HandiHalers include:

- Not standing or sitting upright, or holding the HandiHaler upright.
- Piercing the capsule several times or not at all.
- Not inhaling strongly enough to draw the medication out of the Handihaler and in to your lungs.
- Not taking a second inhalation to ensure you receive the full dose out of the capsule.
- Not holding your breath long enough after breathing in the contents.
- Not being able to tell when the HandiHaler is empty.

Useful tips

- Use a new capsule for each dose.
- The capsule is to be used in the HandiHaler, **NOT swallowed**.
- You should clean your HandiHaler about once every month. To do this, open the dust cap, followed by the mouthpiece. You can also open the base. Run the inhaler under warm water and leave it to dry.
- The Handihaler device should be replaced every 12 months.
- Always close the Handihaler after use.
- Speak to your nurse or pharmacist if you experience problems opening or using your inhaler.
- Always read the patient leaflet provided with your Handihaler for any specific instructions.

How did I do?

Click [here](#) for a video demonstrations on how to use your inhaler.

Note: This document is one in a series that provides inhaler techniques and guidance. For a list of other inhalers supported then please click [here](#).

Please make an appointment to reassess your inhaler technique in:

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|----------|--|----------|--|-----------|--|
| 3 months | | 6 months | | 12 months | |
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