

# Using Your MDI— Open-Mouth Technique

## Patient Education Guide

To make your breathing better, you **MUST** take your medicine as explained below. Following these instructions puts more of the medicine into your lungs. This will open your air passages and help you breathe easier and feel better. You need to ask your health-care provider or pharmacist how many puffs of medicine your metered-dose inhaler (MDI) has when it is full. You need to keep track of how many puffs of medicine you take everyday, so you can have your MDI refilled before you run out of medicine. Before using your MDI, please read the priming or preparing instructions. Your MDI should be cleaned once a week. See the instructions on cleaning your MDI.



**1**  
Take cap off MDI. Check for and remove any dust, lint, or other objects. Shake MDI well.



**2**  
Sit up straight or stand up.



**3**  
Hold your MDI two finger widths away from your lips.



**4**  
Breathe out all the way.

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AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
**CHEST**  
P H Y S I C I A N S

American College of Chest Physicians  
3300 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062  
(847) 498-1400 phone  
(847) 498-5460 fax  
www.chestnet.org



As you begin to **BREATHE IN SLOWLY, PRESS DOWN ON THE MDI**, as shown in this picture. Keep breathing in until your lungs are completely full.



**HOLD** your breath for 10 seconds. If you cannot hold your breath for 10 seconds, hold your breath as long as you can.



If you need to take another puff of medicine, wait 1 minute. After 1 minute, repeat steps 2-6.



Rinse your mouth out after you take your last puff of medicine. Make sure you spit the water out; do not swallow it. *Rinsing is only necessary if the medicine you just took was a corticosteroid, such as Flovent®, Beclovent®, Vanceril®, Aerobid®, or Azmacort®. Recap the MDI.*

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# Priming and Cleaning Your MDI

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### Priming Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI)

Preparing your MDI will need to be done for every new MDI before it is used or if it has been a long time since you last used your MDI. There are two types of MDIs. You need to ask your health-care provider or pharmacist if your MDI is a HFA or a CFC. The type of MDI you have will dictate how you prepare your MDI before use.

**HFA MDIs:** If your MDI is new or has not been used in 2 weeks, shake the MDI very well, then press down on the MDI four times, wasting four puffs into the air. After this is done, you are ready to take your medicine. Follow the instructions below to learn how to take your medicine the correct way. See instructions on using your MDI (separate handout).

**CFC MDIs:** If your MDI is new or has not been used in 12 hours, shake the MDI very well, then press down on the MDI once, wasting one puff of medicine into the air. After this is done, you are ready to take your medicine. Follow the instructions below to learn how to take your medicine the correct way. See instructions on using your MDI (separate handout).

### Cleaning Your MDI



Take metal canister out of plastic container.



Rinse plastic container with warm water at least once a week.



Let plastic container air dry.



Replace metal canister in plastic container.

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