About your Metered Dose Inhalers (MDIs)

It is important you use the inhaler correctly to make sure you have the full dose of the medication you need. Ideally you should use a spacer device whenever possible as this increases the amount of drug that reaches the lungs.

How does it work?
The Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI) is used to provide a certain dose of an aerosol of medication. It is likely to be either: Salbutamol/Ventolin (blue), Salmeterol/Serevent (green), Atrovent (white and green) or one that includes a small dose of steroid such as Fluticasone/Flixotide (orange), Seretide (purple), Becotide (brown) or Alvesco/Ciclesonide (red). These work by relaxing the muscles of the large airways and/or reducing the inflammation of the airways.

How do I use it? (With a spacer)

This is the most effective way to use your inhaler.
1. Shake well and remove cap. Place inhaler in spacer.
2. Take a slow breath out.
3. Press down the top of the canister until the drug is released.
4. Put mouthpiece in mouth and take a gentle breath all the way in and hold breath for 10 seconds or until no longer comfortable.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 after approximately 1 minute.
6. Tidal volume technique. Carry out steps 1-3 place mouth piece in mouth and breath in and out steadily 4-5 times.
7. Slow your breathing in down if your spacer whistles.

How do I use it? (without a spacer)
1. Shake well and remove cap.
2. Take a slow breath out.
3. Place inhaler mouthpiece between lips and make a firm seal.
4. Press top of canister down firmly whilst taking a long slow breath in.
5. Once you have breathed in fully, hold your breath for 10 seconds, take the inhaler out of your mouth, and then breathe out.

Repeat the above process as your prescription indicates. Make sure you shake your inhaler each time. If using a steroid inhaler you will need to rinse your mouth after using your inhaler as it can make your mouth sore and can give you oral thrush.

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