

Use your inhaler correctly

Inhalers are not effective if you use them incorrectly. The correct way to breathe in the medication is different for different types of inhalers.

Ask your doctor to check if you are taking your medicine correctly. Online videos are available that show the correct way to use the most common inhalers. See the National Asthma Council Australia website at: www.NationalAsthma.org.au

Take care of your inhaler

Ask your doctor or pharmacist the correct way to wash and store your inhaler. The best way to care for it is different for each brand of inhaler.

Dry-powder inhalers can become blocked if the powder absorbs too much moisture. You should keep your inhaler closed or covered and in a dry place. Do not breathe into the inhaler.

Some types of CFC-free pressurised metered dose inhalers can become blocked. If you have this type of inhaler you must wash the plastic holder frequently, following the instructions in the pack. These inhalers often include two plastic holders so that you can use one while the other is drying.

How to wash your metered-dose inhaler

1. Take out the metal canister.
2. Wash the plastic holder under warm running water through both ends.
3. Shake off the excess water and leave it to dry thoroughly.
4. When the plastic holder is dry, replace the canister.

What to do now

- Keep taking your inhaled medicine.
- Ask your doctor if you need to change to a new inhaler.

What to do if you start using a new inhaler

- Ask your doctor to show you the correct way to use the inhaler.
- Make sure you know the correct dose and the right number of times to take the medicine.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about how to take care of your inhaler.
- If the medicine feels different or tastes different, do not worry. Some inhalers work differently but all are effective medicines.
- Ask your doctor if you have any problems with your medicine or your symptoms.

Where to get more information

United Nations Environment Programme:
<http://www.unep.fr/ozonAction>



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Using CFC-free lung medicines

Information for patients with asthma or COPD



- Some essential lung medicines for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are taken using inhalers.
- Some types of inhalers for lung medicines will not be available after 2010, because they contain chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).
- CFCs in medicines are safe for patients but they are not used anymore because they harm our planet's ozone layer.
- If you are using an inhaler that contains CFCs, you may have to change to another type of inhaler that is equally effective and safe.
- Your doctor will choose the medicine that is best for you and can show you how to use your new inhaler correctly so that the medicine is effective.

Which inhalers will cease to be available?

Inhalers that contain CFCs will stop being manufactured and sold very soon. However, equally safe and effective alternatives are available.

Dry-powder inhalers do not contain CFCs or any type of chemical propellant. These inhalers will continue to be available and will not change.

Pressurised metered-dose inhalers often contain CFCs. Pressurised metered-dose inhalers are the type of inhalers that contain liquid medicine stored inside a canister. The canister also contains a propellant. A propellant is a chemical that converts the medicine into a mist of small particles so that it can be breathed deep into the lungs. The propellant is evaporated before the medicine reaches your lungs. In the past, most pressurised metered-dose inhalers contained CFCs as propellants.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have this type of inhaler. The inhaler packaging might include this information.

Why CFC inhalers will not be available anymore

Around the world, pharmaceutical companies are gradually ceasing to make and sell inhalers that contain CFCs, because CFCs can damage the ozone layer in the Earth's atmosphere. The ozone layer protects life on Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The amount of CFCs in medicines is only a very small fraction of the CFCs that have been used throughout the world in industry and products.

The CFCs in inhalers evaporate when you breathe in the medicine and they do not harm your health.

From 2010, inhalers containing CFCs will be less available. If you use an inhaler that contains CFCs, you will need to change to a different type of inhaler. You probably do not need to change immediately.

What will happen if your medicine changes

Your doctor will prescribe the type of inhaler that is best for you. There are two types of inhalers that do not contain CFCs. These are CFC-free metered-dose inhalers and dry-powder inhalers.

CFC-free metered-dose inhalers

Pharmaceutical companies have developed newer types of pressurised metered-dose inhalers to replace older inhalers that contain CFCs.



Instead of CFCs, the propellants in these newer inhalers are hydrofluoroalkanes (also called hydrofluorocarbons). The new inhalers were tested thoroughly in many patients to ensure that they are as effective and safe as the old inhalers.

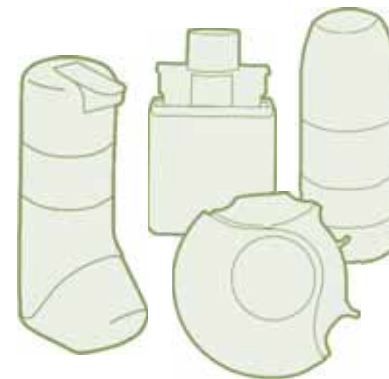
You may notice differences when you start using a CFC-free inhaler. The spray may feel warmer and less forceful. It may sound different, smell different or taste different from your old inhaler. Your dosage may also change. This is normal.

Some CFC-free inhalers contain very small amounts of alcohol. The amount of alcohol per dose (puff) is too small to affect health. The use of medicines that contain alcohol is commonly permitted by religious authorities; you may wish to confirm this with your own religious institution.

Medicines available in CFC-free metered-dose inhalers*

Azmasol (salbutamol)
Clenil (beclomethasone)
Decomit HFA (beclomethasone)
Flixotide (fluticasone)
Seretide (salmeterol and fluticasone)
Seretide Evohaler (salmeterol and fluticasone)
Serevent (salmeterol)
Ventolin (salbutamol)
Ventolin Evohaler (salbutamol)

*Other CFC-free products may also be available in your country. Medicines are listed as: Brand name (generic name).



Dry-powder inhalers

Dry-powder inhalers work differently and do not use any propellant. Therefore they do not contain CFCs. These inhalers will continue to be the same.

Medicines available in dry-powder inhalers*

These inhalers do not contain CFCs and will continue to be available:

Becotide Rotadisk (beclomethasone)
Bricanyl (terbutaline)
Flixotide Accuhaler (fluticasone)
Flixotide Rotadisk (fluticasone)
Oxis (formoterol)
Pulmicort (budesonide)
Salflu Rotacap (fluticasone and salmeterol)
Seretide Accuhaler (fluticasone and salmeterol)
Serevent Accuhaler (salmeterol)
Serevent Rotadisk (salmeterol)
Symbicort (budesonide and formoterol)
Ticamet Cozycap (fluticasone and salmeterol)
Ventolin Accuhaler (salbutamol)
Ventolin Rotadisk (salbutamol)
Ventolin Rotacaps (salbutamol)

*Other products may also be available in your country. Medicines are listed as: Brand name (generic name).

If your medicine is not on these lists, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it will continue to be available.