

# How to Use Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI)

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

*Prepared by:* Pharmacy Department  
*Reviewed by:* Respiriology Clinic  
*Designed by:* Nova Scotia Health Library Services

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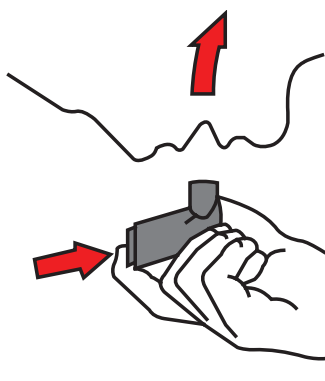
Notes:

# How to Use Your Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI)

A metered-dose inhaler (MDI) is filled with medication that is under pressure. When you press the top of the MDI, it pushes out medication for you to inhale (breathe in).

## To use an MDI:

1. Shake the MDI well (3 or 4 shakes) before using it.
2. Take off the cap.
3. Breathe out, away from the MDI.
4. Bring the MDI close to your mouth (about 1 to 2 inches away).
5. With your mouth open, start to breathe in **slowly**. Press the top of the MDI once and keep breathing in slowly until you have taken a full breath.
6. Close your mouth and hold your breath for about 10 seconds, or as long as you can. Then breathe out.



**If you need more than one dose:**

- › Take only one dose at a time. Wait for 30 seconds between each dose. Then shake the MDI well, and repeat steps 3 to 6.

**After using your MDI:**

- › **Rinse your mouth with water after using any maintenance MDI that contains a corticosteroid.**
- › Put the cap back on your MDI.
- › **Store your MDI at room temperature.**
- › Write down the number of doses you used.

**If you think your MDI is empty:**

- **Do not** float the canister in water.
- Shake it. If it feels light, or if you do not feel liquid moving, it is empty.
- If your MDI has a counter, 0 (zero) means it is empty.

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask. We are here to help you.**

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

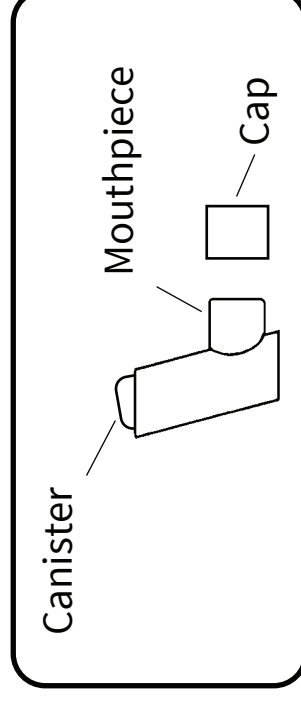
## Remember

- Always follow the instructions that come with your MDI.
- Keep your reliever or rescue MDI somewhere where you can get it quickly if needed, but out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check the expiry date on your MDI before you use it.
- When you start using an MDI, write the start date on the canister.
- Store your MDI at room temperature. If it gets cold, warm it using **only** your hands. **Do not** use anything other than your hands to warm it.
- **Do not** puncture (make a hole in) or break the canister.
- Talk with your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner), pharmacist, respiratory therapist, nurse, or respiratory educator about your MDI. Show them how you are using it.
  - › If you are having trouble using your MDI, ask your health care provider for tips, or to suggest another device.
- Many health care providers recommend using a spacer with an MDI. Ask your health care provider for more information.

## Cleaning your MDI

To clean your MDI, follow the instructions that came with it. For most MDIs, you will:

1. Pull out the metal canister.
2. Clean the **plastic** parts using mild soap (like dish soap) and water. **Do not** wash the metal canister or put it in water.
3. Let the plastic parts air dry (for example, leave them out overnight). **Do not** use a cloth to dry them.
4. Put the MDI back together.
5. Test the MDI by releasing a dose into the air.



## Tips for using your MDI

- Know when to use your maintenance MDI and when to use your reliever or rescue MDI.
- After using your maintenance MDI:
  - › Rinse your mouth with water, gargle, and spit. **Do not swallow.**
- Carry your reliever or rescue MDI with you at all times.
- In cold weather, carry your MDI in a pocket close to your body.

Start date of inhaler: \_\_\_\_\_

YYYY/MM/DD

My MDIs:

Name	Number of doses	How often?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

## Examples of maintenance MDIs

### Long-acting bronchodilators with corticosteroid

- › Advair
- › Zenhale®
- › Breztri™ Aerosphere®

### Inhaled corticosteroids

- › Alvesco®
- › Flovent
- › Qvar RediHaler®

## Examples of reliever or rescue MDIs

### Short-acting bronchodilators

- › Airomir® (salbutamol)
- › Atrovent®
- › Ventolin (salbutamol)