



# Inhalers

## What You Need to Know

### What is an inhaler?

- An inhaler is a device used to get medicine directly into a person's lungs. After the gas from the canister is released, the aerosol should be inhaled.
- After each use of the inhaler remember to check the back of the inhaler for a small number indicator of how many uses are left.



### Who should use an inhaler?

- The most common type of inhaler is the rescue inhalers. The patients that use a rescue inhaler are those with Asthma and COPD who experience shortness of breath and before strenuous exercise.
- If symptoms occur more than three times/week than preventer inhalers would be used which contain steroid medication.
- A preventer inhaler is used everyday to prevent symptoms from developing. A patient that uses a preventer inhaler has a more severe case of COPD and Asthma.

### What do inhalers do to your lungs?

- They are generally used to treat COPD or Asthma.
- Inhalers help relax the muscles surrounding the airway to allow more air flow.
- Inhalers generally work within minutes, but the effects only last a few hours.
- Side effects of an inhaler include:
  - A sore throat, nosebleeds, a cough, or a croaky voice.

### How to maintain your inhaler!

When cleaning your inhaler:

1. Medical canister should be removed along with the cap and spacer.
2. A spacer is a tube attached to the inhaler which holds the medicine, until it is inhaled.
3. Rinse the inhaler with warm water for one minute and allow it to dry completely.
4. If you use a spacer clean it with warm water and a minor amount of dish soap.
5. After reassembling the inhaler, point it away from you and test it by pushing down on the canister.

## Prescription vs Over the Counter

### Prescription Inhalers

Most inhalers can only be obtained through a prescription *after seeing a doctor*.

These include:

- **Rescue inhalers**
  - Albuterol
  - Levalbuterol
- **Long-acting inhalers**
  - Long Acting Beta Antagonists (LABAs)
  - Inhaled corticosteroids

### Over the Counter Inhalers

These inhalers can be used without a prescription from a doctor.

As of now, 2020, there is only one FDA approved inhaler: Pristamine Mist HFA which can be purchased at Walmart (\$45 - \$50).

OTC inhalers are **not** recommended for those with moderate or severe asthma. **They do not act as replacements for prescription inhalers.**

### Where to find discounts

**Walgreens: Alvesco Walgreens \$0 Co-Pay Program:** Eligible commercially insured patients may pay \$0 with no maximum benefit per fill.

**Asmanex HFA Savings Coupon:** Eligible patients may pay as little as \$15 on each prescription for savings of up to \$90 per month.

**AirDuo RespiClick Copay Card:** Eligible uninsured patients may save \$100 on name brand medication or save \$25 of the generic.

The following programs provide financial assistance (at no or low cost) to anyone in need of: Proair HFA aerosol; inhalation (albuterol).

1. **Teva Cares Foundation Patient Assistance Program**
2. **Rx Outreach Medications**  
(Some medications are available for a fee of \$20 for up to a 180 day supply).
3. **HealthWell Foundation Copay Program**  
(Copay assistance program; provides financial assistance to eligible individuals to cover coinsurance, copayments, healthcare premiums and deductibles for certain treatments).
4. **Patient Access Network Foundation (PAN)**  
(Copay assistance program; Patients must have health insurance and their insurance must cover the qualifying medication for which they seek assistance.

Applications and information can be found electronically online.

### Visit the NeedyMeds.org website

Scan the QR code or go to the link below to check out the NeedyMeds drug discount cards which can help you save up to 80% off prescription medications.



SCAN ME!

<https://www.needymeds.org/drug-discount-card>



Presented by the Needy Meds and Lung Health Committees of the Riverside Free Clinic

