

How to use your child's dry powder inhaler

Are there different types of dry powder inhalers? — Yes. There are 2 main types of dry powder inhalers:

- Single-dose inhalers
- Multiple-dose inhalers

The directions for the 2 types of inhalers are slightly different.

How do I use my child's dry powder inhaler? — Each dry powder inhaler has its own directions. Your doctor or nurse will show you how to use your child's inhaler.

In general, these are the steps for using a dry powder inhaler:

- Open the inhaler or take off the cover
- Load a dose of medicine:
 - For single-dose inhalers, you load a dose by taking a pill out of its packaging and putting the pill into the inhaler. Then you need to push 1 or more buttons on the inhaler to poke holes in the pill.
 - For multiple-dose inhalers, you load a dose by sliding a lever or twisting the bottom (or another part) of the inhaler.
- Hold the inhaler in the correct position – Some inhalers need to be held upright, but others need to be horizontal. Multiple-dose inhalers usually need to be horizontal.
- Have your child breathe out normally—but **not** into the inhaler
- Have your child put his or her mouth on the mouthpiece
- Have your child breathe in quickly and steadily, as deeply as possible
- Have your child remove his or her mouth from the mouthpiece and hold his or her breath for 5 to 10 seconds
- Have your child let his or her breath out—but **not** into the inhaler
- For single-dose inhalers, you need to open the inhaler, take out the used pill, and throw it away
- If your child is supposed to take 2 puffs of the inhaler, load another dose and have him or her repeat the steps above
- Close the inhaler or replace the cover or cap
- Have your child rinse out his or her mouth, and spit out the water
- Store the inhaler in a cool, dry place

Do I need to clean my child's inhaler? — No. Do **not** wash a dry powder inhaler with water or put it under water. If the mouthpiece gets dirty, you can wipe it with a dry cloth.

How do I know when my child's inhaler is empty? — Many dry powder inhalers come with a built-in dose counter. A counter keeps track of how many doses are left in the inhaler.

When the counter reads 0 (zero), it's time to throw out the inhaler. That's because there is no more medicine in it. Make sure to have another inhaler on hand before the counter reads 0.

If the inhaler doesn't have a built-in counter, you need to keep track of the number of doses left in the inhaler. Based on how often your child uses the inhaler, you can figure out when he or she will need a refill and write this date down.



This topic retrieved from UpToDate on: Dec 02, 2015.

The content on the UpToDate website is not intended nor recommended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your own physician or other qualified health care professional regarding any medical questions or conditions. The use of UpToDate content is governed by the [UpToDate Terms of Use](#). ©2015 UpToDate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Topic 16116 Version 3.0