

Metered Dose Inhalers/Spacers

Skill Validation Tool
For Health Office Staff

Name: _____ School: _____

Observed By: _____ Date Observed: _____

Metered Dose Inhalers/Spacers	Yes	No
1. Describe the benefits of a metered dose inhaler (MDI).		
a. quick		
b. portable		
c. direct delivery to lungs		
2. Advantages of using a spacing device with the MDI (higher percent of dose reaches the lung).		
3. Using the MDI with a spacer		
a. stand up		
b. shake well to mix medicine (5 seconds)		
c. remove caps from both inhaler and spacer (check that there is nothing in the mouthpiece or spacer that could be accidentally inhaled). Attach spacer to inhaler.		
d. hold inhaler upright		
e. breathe out gently, get as much air out of the lungs without forcing		
f. close lips around mouthpiece while tilting head back slightly		
g. press down on inhaler while breathing in slowly and deeply (3-5 seconds) to fill lungs completely		
h. hold breath for as long as possible (10 seconds) and then exhale		
i. wait 1 minute before each puff or as prescribed by primary provider		
4. Special inhalers/spacers/holding chambers		
a. InspirEase spacer: has special feature to help teach better breathing technique, and is very useful for use with students who don't fully understand how to breathe in and out, or are not able to hold their breath.		
i. Connect mouthpiece to the resevier bag by lining up the locking tabs with the opening in the bag, then push in and twist to lock.		
ii. Untwist the bag gently to open it to its full size. Remove inhaler canister from it's original plastic "boot" and shake well before placing its stem in the mouthpiece (some canisters may fit more loosely than others which will not affect drug delivery).		
iii. If desired, place the clear cylinder-like piece – the actuation aid – over the inhaler canister, fitting grooves into matching slots in the mouthpiece. This allows the student to use both hands to dispense the medication in stead of just one hand.		
iv. Place mouthpiece in mouth and close lips tightly around it.		
v. Place fingers on fingerholds with thumb under mouthpiece and pull down with fingers to release one dose of medicine into the bag.		
vi. Breathe in slowly through the mouthpiece. If you hear a whistling sound, breathe slower until no sound can be heard.		
vii. Breathe in the entire contents of the bag until the bag collapses and student can't breather in anymore.		
viii. Hold breath while slowly counting to 5 (or 10).		
ix. Breathe out slowly into the bag.		
x. Repeat the breathing in and out steps (vi. – ix.) a second time, keeping lips tightly closed around the mouthpiece.		
b. Valved holding chamber (e.g aerochamber, optichamber, etc.). Follow the same instructions as the MDI with spacer directions above. Be aware that with these types of chambers, if student breathes in too fast, a whistling sound will be heard).		
c. Azmacort (white corticosteroid inhaler which comes with a built-in spacer)		
i. Pull open the white canister so that it is about twice as long as it was in it's collapsed state. Then bend the inhaler into an "L" appearance.		
ii. Remove cap, shake inhaler and use as you would a regular MDI with spacer.		

5. Describe how to clean the spacer and MDI each week		
a. Look at the hole where the medicine sprays out from your inhaler. If you see "powder" in or around the hole, clean the inhaler.		
b. To do so, remove the metal canister from the L-shaped plastic mouthpiece.		
c. Rinse only the mouthpiece and cap in warm water (on daily basis).		
d. Let plastic pieces dry overnight		
e. In general, clean spacers once a week or according to manufacturer's instructions (to prevent build-up of medication on the sides & mouthpiece).		
f. Take spacer apart and wash each piece separately. Some spacers have delicate flap valve, the soft, round disk under the mouthpiece. Remove, do not rip disk. Replace if disk begins to harden and curl.		
g. Use warm water and a gently soap or gentle dishwashing detergent.		
h. Let pieces air-dry on a clean lint-free towel before using spacer again.		
i. With bag type spacers such as InspirEase, the collapsible bags should not be washed; they are disposable if they tear. The length of time between bag replacements varies by manufacturer. Check manufacturer's instructions. Wipe mouthpiece of bag type spacers after each use.		
6. To determine the number of puffs left in the inhaler (# of puffs listed on canister) Divide total # by # of puffs taken/day and subtract from total # to determine # of puffs left in canister.		
7. Document the MDI treatment in the appropriate record (SHOAR) as well as cleaning (in comments section or elsewhere on form)		
8. Document education provided and meds given to student in the appropriate record (SHOAR)		

Demonstrated Competency

Yes

No