

# Get the best out of your puffer

## - Use a spacer

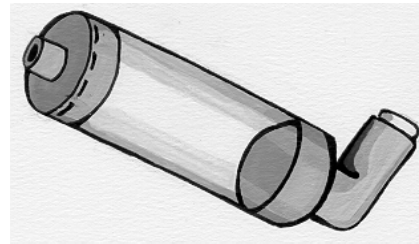
Metered dose inhalers (MDI's) or puffers contain asthma medications that are inhaled. These devices deliver an effective dose into the airways where it is needed, but perhaps as much as 85% can remain in the mouth and throat.

Other problems that may be associated with the regular use of preventative puffers are:

- sore throat.
- hoarse voice.
- need for good hand coordination.
- ineffective technique can mean very little of the dosage is delivered to the lungs.

These effects can be reduced by the use of a spacer. However it is still good practice to rinse your mouth out after taking any inhaled medication. Remember to spit out the rinse rather than swallowing it! This will not wash away the dose just taken, as the very fine particles will already be working deep down in your lungs.

### What are spacers?



Spacers are plastic containers that provide a temporary reservoir for the medication from a metered dose aerosol. They are available in a variety of different shapes and sizes with a one-way valve that allows breathing from but not into the spacer chamber. Some are specific to a particular brand of puffer, whereas others have a multi-purpose fitting. Adapters are available.

### Why use a spacer?

- Up to 50% more medicine reaches your breathing tubes
- This may allow dose reduction
- As effective as a nebuliser for acute asthma
- There is less risk of throat irritation or a husky voice
- Useful for all age groups – young and old
- Even less steroid reaches your blood stream
- Easy to use
- It's cheap!

