

How to Use Your Albuterol Inhaler
(Or valve-holding chamber, like AeroChamber® or Easivent®)

STEP 1: Place mask over nose and mouth creating a seal

STEP 2: Discharge medicine

STEP 3: Hold in place until child has taken 5-6 breaths (15-20 seconds). (They DO NOT need to take a big breath, time their breath with discharge of the medication, or hold their breath afterward)

*Note that it is sometimes hard for parents to know if their child's cough is an asthma cough. In a child who has wheezed before, if there is ever a nagging/persistent cough or bad cough it is NEVER wrong to use Albuterol. There are NO long term side effects from Albuterol, and the common things that make children cough (illness, allergies, etc.) are the things that trigger asthma!

Mild Attack

If your child is using Albuterol (2-4 puffs) with spacer or nebulizer treatment 1-3 times a day for 7 days, and he/she is not improving.

**For mild attacks, schedule an appointment with your doctor immediately.*

Moderate Attack

If your child is using Albuterol (2-4 puffs) with spacer or nebulizer treatment every 4-6 hours around the clock for 48-72 hours and he/she is not improving, or if Albuterol is not lasting 4 hours consistently.

(It is OK to use Albuterol more often than every 4 hours occasionally...example: if it has been an hour, and your child needs Albuterol again, use it; but if they need it again an hour or two later, that is a bad sign, and they need prompt evaluation).

**For moderate attacks, schedule an appointment with your doctor immediately or go to the ER.*

Severe Attack

Note that 50% of severe attacks happen very quickly, the other half develop over 1-3 days. In a severe attack, you can do up to 3 nebulizer treatments per hour or 4 puffs of the inhaler with spacer every 20 minutes x 3.

**For severe attacks, schedule an appointment with your doctor immediately or go to the ER. If your child stops breathing, call 911.*

Signs of Respiratory Distress

Increase in breathing rate and working harder to breath – retractions (skin sucking in under/between the ribs or over the collar bone/breast bone), nasal flaring, head bobbing, or grunting (making an exhalation noise).