

New Asthma Treatment Guidelines

The way we use asthma inhalers in the UK is changing. The new system significantly reduces hospital admissions, exacerbations and, reduces long term scarring of the lungs – so it's safer to use.

The aim is to completely control your symptoms; so to use more inhaler when you need it, but then to reduce the amount you use when you don't need it.

Almost every patient who has switched, much prefers this way as it is easier and provides better control (as well as being safer).

New Inhaler

Over the coming weeks we will change your inhalers to the new regime depending on your asthma control. It uses a combination inhaler as the first-choice treatment. This 2-in-1 inhaler contains:

- **A preventer = same as a brown inhaler = steroid = reduces inflammation -**
- **A reliever = provides immediate symptom relief like a blue inhaler – but stays working for 10-12hours = long-acting beta-agonist (LABA) = opens airways -**

So whether you use 1 or 2 inhalers at the moment – from now on you will only get one.

Everyday Asthma care for most patients:

If getting symptoms, use 1-2 puffs morning and night

Use an extra puff if the symptoms are still not controlled after a few minutes

You can repeat this if needed, up to a maximum of 8 puffs a day.

When your asthma has been well controlled for a while try to reduce the amount of inhaler you use.

If you remain well, you can even stop taking it, if it's not needed. And start again when you do.

Some people only need to use it occasionally e.g. before sport – that is fine.

Only use it during hayfever season when your asthma's bad – that's fine

Only use it when you have a cold – that's fine

Need to take it every day – that's fine.

Peak Flow: the best way to measure your asthma control.

The tighter your airways are, the lower your peak flow will be.

Knowing what your peak flow is like normally – helps you and us work out how to best manage your asthma, and how much treatment to give you.

Best technique video to get a true reading: [Click here](#)

If your asthma is not improving with your inhaler and you are having an exacerbation, then you may benefit from steroid tablets, to reduce the inflammation, and open the airways (making it easier to breath in the short term, and reducing lung scarring in the long term).

In the past some people have struggled on for a long time with bad asthma – we want to give you clear guidance when you would benefit from steroid tablets (or even when to go into hospital) and your peak flow is vital to do this.

EVERY asthmatic patient should have a peak flow meter at home and know how to use it.

Spacers

As a reminder, it is always best to use your inhaler with a spacer if you want the medicine to get down into your lungs. – no matter how good your technique is. [This video](#) can show you how to go from 20% of each dose getting to where it needs to work – up to 80% of each puff actually helping you.

We recommend 2 types of spacer – with different advantages:

Able Spacer



Able spacer can fit the inhaler in your spacer so its easier to take with you during the day

Aerochamber



Aerochamber has a built in whistle that sounds if you are breathing in too fast.

A spacer needs to be washed every couple of months when being used. And the valves don't last forever. We'll give you an option to request another of your choice if you need.

If you were sent a link to this page

please go back to the message we sent you and follow the link.

We will ask you:

- a few questions to gauge how well your asthma is controlled at the moment.
 - if you know your normal peak flow reading,
 - If you need us to prescribe you a new peak flow meter.
- If you need us to prescribe you a new spacer (and what type you would like)

We will then send your new inhaler (and anything else you've requested) to your normal chemist.

We'll also message you with a new "asthma management plan". It has instructions on how best to look after your asthma, and advice on when you need to phone us for help or other medication.

In 2-3 months, we'll then send you a follow up message to check how you are getting on (but if you are having any problems please don't wait - get in touch sooner)

Should you have any concerns surrounding this change, please contact the health centre to discuss this with a member of our team.

Further Helpful information

Inhaler Technique -

Review your inhaler technique

[More info here](#)