



# Inhaled Steroid Medicines and Asthma



## Steroids

- Are made by our bodies to handle stress and fight infection
- They are used as inhalers to control asthma and prevent symptoms
- They are used by mouth (tablets or liquids) for quick-relief in some asthma attacks

### Are steroids safe?

- Some can be harmful if not used correctly (like the ones people use to make bigger muscles). These are NOT the same as steroids used to treat asthma.
- Inhaled steroids help treat inflammation (swelling) in lungs with asthma

### I've taken steroids before and they didn't help me. Why does my doctor still want me to use them?

- Inhaled steroids are asthma controllers
- They don't work fast
- They work slowly to prevent symptoms.
- To work, they must be used every day without skipping doses
- If they are given as a regular inhaled you should always use it with a spacer
- If they aren't working have your healthcare provider check your inhaler technique

### What are the side effects of inhaled steroids?

- Thrush (white patches on throat or tongue), sore throat or hoarseness
- These side effects can be minimized if you brush or rinse your mouth after use and if you use a spacer with the standard inhaler (shown above)
- Call your doctor if you think you have a side effect
- Use your inhaled steroid right (see back of page) to prevent side effects.

### Can steroids affect a child's growth?

- Steroids by mouth if taken often or over a long time can slow growth.
- Poorly controlled asthma can slow growth.
- With long-term use of inhaled steroids, some patients may have about 1 centimeter decrease in adult height, but this does not occur in all patients and it depends on the dose used.
- Keep asthma controlled so oral steroids by mouth won't be needed often.
- Stay away from asthma triggers. Use your controller medicines every day and check with your doctor if your asthma isn't controlled.

<p><b>Examples of Steroid Inhalers (Used to control asthma):</b></p> <p>Beclomethasone (QVar<sup>®</sup>),  Budesonide (Pulmicort<sup>®</sup>, Symbicort<sup>®</sup>),  Mometasone (Asmanex<sup>®</sup>, Dulera<sup>®</sup>),  Fluticasone (Advair<sup>®</sup>, Flovent<sup>®</sup>),  Ciclesonide (Alvesco<sup>®</sup>)</p>	<p><b>Examples of Steroids by Mouth (Used for quick-relief):</b></p> <p>Methylprednisolone (Medrol)  Prednisolone (Deltacortef, Pediapred, Prelone, Orapred)  Prednisone (Deltasone, LiquidPred, Orasone, Steripred)</p>
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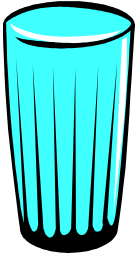
**Steroid inhalers:**

If you use a steroid inhaler, you should gargle and rinse afterwards. It's even better to brush your teeth. Medicine left in the mouth or throat can cause side effects.

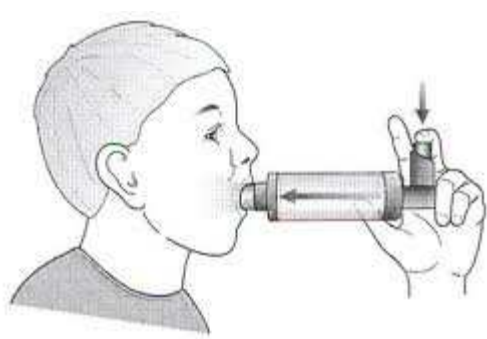


Rinsing, gargling, or brushing and **spitting out** afterward can prevent side effects.

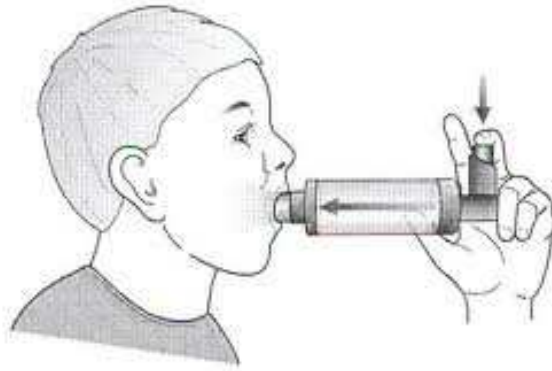
If you use a regular metered dose steroid inhaler, always use your spacer (see below). It can slow the medicine down. Less will land on your tongue and throat. More will get into your lungs.



Always check with your doctor to make sure you are using your inhaler correctly



Spacer



## How to use a steroid inhaler

1. Remove the cap. Check that nothing is inside the plastic case.
2. When using a spacer, attach the inhaler to the spacer (see picture).
3. Shake the inhaler (with spacer attached).
4. Breathe out normally.
5. Hold the inhaler as shown in the picture below:
6. Press inhaler once to release the medicine just as you **begin** to inhale.
7. Continue to inhale slowly (over about 5 seconds) until your lungs are full.
8. Remove inhaler and hold breath for 10 seconds. Then breathe out normally.
9. Instead of inhaling the puff and holding their breath, **younger patients** can take one puff and breathe in and out slowly 5 times.
10. Wait 1 minute before taking additional puffs.
11. Brush teeth OR rinse mouth, gargle and spit after finished.

