

# QuickAsthma Card

## *Inhalers – Control and Relief at Your Fingertips*

Ahhhh...an inhaler offers quick-relief and/or long-term control. There are two basic types that deliver medication directly into the lungs to treat asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other respiratory problems:

A ***metered dose inhaler (MDI)*** is a pressurized canister of medicine with a mouthpiece that can be held away from your mouth, placed between your teeth or used with a spacer. Ask your health care professional to demonstrate and discuss the best method for you. General instructions:

1. Remove cap and shake inhaler.
2. Tilt head back and breathe out.
3. Hold inhaler two finger- widths away from open mouth, compress and inhale.
4. Breathe in slowly for 3-5 seconds.
5. Hold breath for 10 seconds.
6. Wait at least one minute and continue as directed.

A spacer attaches to the inhaler and traps medicine, making it unnecessary to coordinate compressing the inhaler with breathing in. Spacers with masks are available for younger children and individuals unable to use the spacer alone. See AAFA's QuickAsthma card, *Secrets of Spacers/Holding Chambers* for more information on using/cleaning spacers.

**Tracking puffs** – Divide total puffs (on side of canister) by the puffs used daily. If there are 200 puffs and you use 4 each day, your canister will last 50 days. Mark the refill date on the canister and your calendar. If you do not use your inhaler every day or use several inhalers, there are inhaler attachments that track puffs. Ask your health care professional for information.

*\*Do not store your MDI in a cold or hot place (like a glove compartment.)*

A **dry-powdered inhaler (DPI)** delivers medication in a variety of ways. Some must be loaded with medication each time, while others are pre-loaded for multiple inhalations. Using a DPI is different from an MDI because you must inhale forcefully since there is no propellant. Do not shake or breathe into a DPI. You might not taste, feel or smell the dry powder. Don't worry; if you are following directions, you are receiving the medication. When using a corticosteroid, remember to rinse, gargle and spit.

*\*Never place any inhaler in water.*



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America

### Important Information

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE/CELL \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ PHYSICIAN \_\_\_\_\_

INHALER: #1 \_\_\_\_\_

INHALATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_ FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

INHALATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_ FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

CALL/EMAIL FOR REFILLS \_\_\_\_\_

Visit the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America at [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org) for more information on allergies and asthma.