

## Home Nebulizer Treatments

Many medications are most effective when inhaled directly into the lungs. In order to be inhaled into the small airways, medication must be changed from a liquid into a fine mist. To create this fine mist at home, you will need a nebulizer and compressor. A nebulizer is a plastic container that breaks liquids into a fine mist using a jet of air. The compressor, run by electricity or battery, provides the jet of air to the nebulizer.

### How to use your home nebulizer:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before beginning treatment.
2. Plug in the compressor.
3. If the medication is in a pre-mixed single dose vial, open the vial and place the medication into the nebulizer cup.
4. If the medication is in a multiple dose container, draw up the prescribed amount of medication(s) with a dropper or syringe and place it into the nebulizer. Most medications can be mixed together, but ask your doctor if you are not sure.
5. Add normal saline if prescribed. This can be obtained at a pharmacy. It is important to add medication first because of the small amounts of medication.
6. Attach the nebulizer to the compressor tubing. Turn the power on. (The medication will immediately begin to be nebulized in a fine mist.) Place the mouthpiece in the mouth and breathe slowly in and out until all the medication is gone. If the child is able, instruct the child to take an extra deep breath every 10 breaths then hold for 10 seconds and breathe out slowly. This helps the medication to stay in the lungs longer for better effect.

If the child is too small to use a mouthpiece, use a snug-fitting mask. **Do not blow the medication** in the child's face. This will result in less medication delivered to the lungs. The mask should cover the nose and mouth snugly throughout the treatment.

Most nebulizers work best in an upright position. During the treatment gently shake the nebulizer occasionally if the mixture has coated the sides and isn't being nebulized. An average treatment takes 8 - 10 minutes. The treatment is over when almost all of the medication is gone and the nebulizer makes a constant sputtering noise.

Some children cough up mucus after breathing treatments. Observe the color and thickness. Normal secretions are usually white/clear and thin. Thick and sticky mucus that is a yellow or green color may indicate viral or bacterial infection. Call your doctor to report a change.

- If your child needs more treatments than prescribed by your doctor, or if the treatments do not improve the symptoms, call your doctor.

**Your doctor has prescribed treatments to be given \_\_\_\_\_ times a day or every \_\_\_\_\_ hours or as needed. The medication(s) to be nebulized is/are \_\_\_\_\_ ml mixed in \_\_\_\_\_ ml of normal saline or \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Do not increase the number of treatments greater than \_\_\_\_\_ within a 24-hour period without checking with your doctor.**

**Equipment Supplier \_\_\_\_\_**

Please call the respiratory therapists with any questions you may have.  
720-777- 6227

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Reviewed by: Diane Herrick  
Reviewed: Nov. 2005

Approved by Patient/Family Education Committee

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