Asthma 411

Understanding Spacers

_____ *(Student's name)* had a breathing treatment at school this week because they had trouble breathing. Your school district is part of Asthma 411. So, your school nurse or health staff gave your child medicine to help them breathe easier. The breathing treatment was done using an inhaler with a spacer or holding chamber.

What are inhalers and spacers?

An inhaler is a canister that you squeeze to release a puff of medicine. A spacer is a tube that connects to the inhaler. At school, your child used the LiteAire® spacer. This is a disposable spacer that can be used for up to one week. Your child received their spacer to show you how they used it.

Why should your child use a spacer?

Spacers help asthma medicine get down into your child's lungs, where it is needed. Without a spacer, most of the medicine stays in your child's mouth or throat. Medicine that does not reach the lungs cannot help them breathe. Medicine that remains in the mouth or throat can cause irritation or mild infections.

When should your child use a spacer?

Spacers should be used every time your child uses a metered dose inhaler(MDI) to take their controller or quick-relief asthma medicine. Ask your health care provider if your child needs a spacer.

How to use an inhaler with a spacer

1. Remove the cap from the inhaler and the spacer.
2. Check that there are no objects in the spacer or inhaler.
3. Shake the inhaler for 5 seconds.
4. Insert the mouth piece of the inhaler into the spacer.
5. Stand or sit up straight. Hold the spacer with the canister upright.
6. Breathe out all the way.
7. Wrap your lips around the mouthpiece without biting it.
8. As you start to breathe in slowly and deeply, press the canister 1 time to release the medication. Keep breathing in slowly and deeply. Hold your breath for 10 seconds then breathe out slowly.
9. If your doctor prescribed more than one puff, wait 60 seconds and repeat step 8.
10. Rinse with water and spit out.

For more information about spacers visit www.asthma411.org