

# HOW TO USE A Dry Powder Inhaler



A dry powder inhaler delivers pre-set doses of medicine in powder form. The medicine gets to your airways when you take a deep, fast breath in from the inhaler. To keep your asthma under control, it is important to take your medicine as prescribed by your doctor or other health care professional and to use the proper technique to deliver the medicine to your lungs. If you don't use your inhaler correctly, you won't get the medicine you need.

Here are general steps for how to use and clean a dry powder inhaler. Be sure to read the instructions that come with *your* inhaler. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or other health care professional (such as nurse practitioner, physician assistant, nurse, respiratory therapist, or asthma educator) to show you how to use your inhaler. Review your technique at each follow-up visit.

1. Remove cap and hold inhaler upright (like a rocket). If the inhaler is a Diskus®, hold it flat (like a flying saucer).
2. Load a dose of medicine according to manufacturer's instructions (each brand of inhaler is different; you may have to prime the inhaler the first time you use it). Do **not** shake the inhaler.
3. Stand up or sit up straight.
4. Take a deep breath in and blow out completely to empty your lungs. Do **not** blow into the inhaler.
5. Place the mouthpiece of the inhaler in your mouth and close your lips around it to form a tight seal.
6. Take a fast, deep, forceful breath in through your mouth.
7. Hold your breath and count to 10.
8. Take the inhaler out of your mouth. Breathe out slowly, facing away from the inhaler.
9. If you are supposed to take more than 1 inhalation of medicine per dose, wait 1 minute and repeat steps 2 through 8.
10. When you finish, put the cover back on the inhaler or slide the cover closed. Store the inhaler in a cool, dry place (not in the bathroom).
11. If using an inhaled corticosteroid, rinse out your mouth with water and spit it out. Rinsing helps to prevent an infection in the mouth.

## HOW TO CLEAN A DRY POWDER INHALER

- Wipe the mouthpiece at least once a week with a dry cloth.
- Do **NOT** use water to clean the dry powder inhaler.



National Asthma Education  
and Prevention Program (NAEPP)

Convened by the  
National Institutes of Health