

# How to Use and Care for Your Nebulizer

A nebulizer is a device driven by a compressed air machine. It allows you to take asthma medicine in the form of a mist (wet aerosol). It consists of a cup, a mouthpiece attached to a T-shaped part or a mask, and thin, plastic tubing to connect to the compressed air machine. Mostly three types of patients use it:

- Children under age 5
- Patients who have problems using metered-dose inhalers
- Patients with severe asthma

A nebulizer helps to make sure you get the right amount of medicine.

Routinely cleaning the nebulizer is important because an unclean nebulizer may cause an infection. A good cleaning routine keeps the nebulizer from clogging up and helps it last longer (see instructions with nebulizer).

Directions for using the compressed air machine may vary (check the machine's directions), but generally the tubing has to be put into the outlet of the machine before it is turned on.

## How to Use a Nebulizer

1. For premixed/pre-measured medication, twist off top of vial and squirt medication into nebulizer.
2. Fasten the mouthpiece to the T-shaped part and then fasten this unit to the cup **OR** fasten the mask to the cup. For a child over the age of 2, use a mouthpiece unit because it will deliver more medicine than a mask.
3. Put the mouthpiece in your mouth. Seal your lips tightly around it **OR** place the mask on your face.
4. Turn on the air compressor machine.
5. Take slow, deep breaths in through the mouth.
6. Continue until the medicine is gone from the cup (approximately 10 minutes).
7. Store the medicine as directed after each use.

## Cleaning the Nebulizer

**Don't forget:** Cleaning and getting rid of germs prevent infection. Cleaning keeps the nebulizer from clogging up and helps it last longer.

### Cleaning Needed After Each Use

1. With power switch in the **OFF** position, unplug power cord from wall outlet.
2. Disassemble nebulizer.
3. Wash all items, except tubing, in a hot water/dishwashing detergent solution. Rinse under hot tap water for 30 seconds to remove detergent residue. Allow to air dry.