



## Bronchiolitis Supplementary Information – Spacer and Salbutamol Instructions

### You have been sent home with a blue Inhaler for your child

**Blue inhalers** are used during a wheezy episode because they work by relaxing tightened airway muscles and this can help reduce wheeze and relieve breathing difficulties.

### Managing your child's wheeze at home

When you get home from hospital give 6 puffs of the **blue inhaler** with the spacer

After 2 hours check your child and follow the instructions below.

Assess their **wheeze, breathing** and **behaviour**.

[*Recession = the chest sucking in below or between the ribs with each breath*].

Normal signs	Mild signs	More serious signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Breathing normally (not fast)</li> <li>▪ No wheeze</li> <li>▪ No recession</li> <li>▪ Normal behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wheeze</li> <li>▪ Mild recession</li> <li>▪ Breathing a little fast</li> <li>▪ Able to talk, eat and drink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Breathing fast</li> <li>▪ Moderate or severe recession</li> <li>▪ Short of breath</li> <li>▪ They seem tired or agitated</li> </ul>
 <b>No need to give the inhaler</b>	 <b>Give 6 puffs of the blue inhaler</b>	 <b>Give 6 puffs of the blue inhaler</b>
 Check their breathing again - using the signs above in <b>4 hours</b>	 Check their breathing again - using the signs above in <b>2 hours</b>	 Bring back to the ED – check for <b>danger signs</b>

**As your child's breathing improves** - they will need the inhaler less often or not at all and you can check their breathing less often.

**If your child gets worse** - give the inhaler more often and check more often – see notes on the main bronchiolitis handout about when to bring them back to ED and the **danger signs** to watch for.

## Using a Spacer Device What you need to know

### What is a Spacer?

A spacer is a device that helps the drugs in inhalers get into the lungs where they are needed. Using an inhaler without a spacer (especially for children) means lots of the drug gets wasted as it stays in the mouth.

## Children younger than 3 years of age.

### Use a small spacer with a mask

- Sit your child in an upright position on your lap.
- Shake the inhaler
- Place the inhaler in the spacer device.
- Place the mask over your child's nose and mouth.
- Press on the inhaler to deliver the dose
- Ensure the valve flutters with each breath – your child needs to take 6 breaths for each dose.
- Remove the inhaler from the spacer and shake it between each dose.



**If your child will not sit still, try wrapping them in a towel or sheet to contain their arms and lay them down so you can hold the mask over their nose and mouth more easily.**

## Important!

- During a wheezy episode, your child may be given a blue inhaler or the doctor may tell you to give your blue inhaler more often.
- Always give the number of puffs your doctor has prescribed.
- For each puff or dose your child must take 6 breaths.

## How to care for your Spacer

### Once a week

- Take the spacer apart (the small spacer breaks into a tube and 2 end pieces and the larger spacers break into 2 pieces).
- Use warm water with a little dishwashing liquid and hand wash your spacer.
- Do not rinse or wipe the spacer. Leave the pieces on the side to dry.
- Put the spacer back together when dry
- Do not allow anyone else to use the spacer
- Replace the spacer after 6 months or if it looks damaged. Your family doctor can give you a new spacer for free.

## If you have a new spacer

### Before using it for the first time:

- Place the inhaler into the spacer and press it 10 times.
- Then wait 30 seconds before using it.

**You do not need to do this again after washing it.**

Illustrations adapted from [http://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact\\_sheets/Asthma\\_Use\\_of\\_spacers/](http://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Asthma_Use_of_spacers/)

