

QuickAsthma Card

Nebulizers – Medicine in a Mist

What is a nebulizer? Nebulizer compressors or “breathing machines,” turn liquid medicine into mist. The nebulizer is the plastic cup-like device where medication is placed.

Who needs one? Babies, young children and individuals having an asthma episode or experiencing difficulty using an inhaler.

How do you give a treatment?

1. Wash hands, measure solutions as prescribed into nebulizer (medication cup).
2. Tightly connect tubing from compressor to nebulizer. A finger valve may be attached between nebulizer base and tubing.
3. Attach mouthpiece, turn compressor on.
4. Place mouthpiece between teeth and close lips around it. Keep nebulizer upright.
5. To start mist, cover hole in finger valve. If device does not have a finger valve, it will continually mist.
6. As mist starts, breathe in slowly over three to five seconds.
7. At the end of deep breath, remove finger from valve and hold your breath for up to ten seconds.
8. Tap nebulizer so all medication becomes mist. Continue until empty.
9. If using a mask, hold mask so nose and mouth are covered. Use elastic band to secure to head. Some pediatric masks make it possible to give a treatment while the patient is lying down. Continue at #8 above.

* The blowby technique (aiming the mist at the patient’s mouth) is ineffective and should not be used for any reason.

Cleaning

Follow manufacturer's directions. General guidelines:

1. Take nebulizer apart and wash, with exception of tubing and finger valve, with liquid dish soap and warm water. Rinse. Some nebulizers may be top-shelf dishwasher safe.
2. Shake off water and reattach to compressor to quickly dry.
3. Pack nebulizer/compressor/tubing after all parts are dry.
4. On alternate treatment days, soak nebulizer in a fresh solution of 1 part distilled white vinegar to 3 parts hot water. Rinse and dry as directed.

Reusable nebulizers may last one year, but antibiotics or improper cleaning can shorten the time they deliver effective treatments. Closely follow manufacturer's recommendations. Keep a spare nebulizer as a back up. Check compressor filter replacement recommendations.

Important Information

Name _____ Date _____

Emergency contact _____

Medication(s)/solutions for nebulizer _____

Average treatment time _____



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