

MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



Using A HandiHaler®

Many medications are available as inhaled treatments. Inhaled methods deliver medication directly to the airway, which is helpful for lung diseases. The patient and health care provider can choose from a variety of delivery systems for inhaling medication.

A HandiHaler® consists of a plastic device to inhale medication. A capsule of powdered medication is placed in the device. The HandiHaler® is breath activated. This means when you inhale, the HandiHaler® automatically releases the medication. When inhaled correctly, the medication has a better chance to reach the small airways. This increases the medication's effectiveness. The portable size, efficiency and convenience make the HandiHaler® a desirable method for inhalation treatment.

The following steps outline the best method to use a HandiHaler®.

How to Assemble the HandiHaler®

- Each capsule for the HandiHaler® is individually wrapped. The wrapping is called a blister card. When you are ready to use the capsule, separate one blister pack from the blister card. Tear along the perforation to do this. Take the capsule out of the blister pack. To do this, find the corner of the blister pack with the arrow. Peel back this corner of the blister pack until you see the capsule.
- Open the cover of the HandiHaler® by pressing the green button on the side on the device. Lift the cover.



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- Open the mouthpiece of the HandiHaler® by lifting the mouthpiece ridge.



- Place the capsule in the hole in the center of the HandiHaler®.



- Close the mouthpiece. You will hear a click when the mouthpiece is closed.
- Leave the cover of the HandiHaler® open.

Taking an Inhaled Treatment:

- Hold the HandiHaler® with the mouthpiece up. Press the green button on the side of the HandiHaler® once firmly. This will pierce the capsule, so you can inhale the medication when you breathe in.



- Hold the HandiHaler® away from your mouth and gently breathe out. Do not blow into the HandiHaler®.
- Seal your lips around the mouthpiece.
- Inhale slowly and deeply but at a rate sufficient to hear the capsule vibrate. Continue to take a full, deep breath.
- Resume normal breathing.
- You can repeat steps 2 to 5 again to make sure you inhale the medication.
- Open the mouthpiece and throw away the used capsule. Do not touch the capsule once it has been pierced.
- Keep the HandiHaler® closed when not in use. This will help keep the HandiHaler® clean and dry.



Note: This information is provided to you as an educational service of LUNG LINE®. It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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