Learn how to use your inhalers

**Identify your inhaler (MDI)**

1. **Take cap off and shake**
   - Unicap the inhaler. Shake hard up and down for 5 seconds.

2. **Breathe in and out**
   - Breathe out all the way away from the inhaler.

3. **Put inhaler in mouth**
   - Close your lips around the mouthpiece. Keep your tongue out of the way.

4. **Breathe in and press**
   - Breathe in slowly as you press down the top of the inhaler 1 time.

5. **Hold for 5 seconds**
   - Hold your breath for 5 seconds. Take the inhaler out of your mouth.

6. **Breathe normally**
   - Breath in and out normally.

7. **Wait and repeat**
   - Wait 15 seconds before repeating steps 1-6 for the next puff.

8. **Rinse with water**
   - If using a controller inhaler, after 2 puffs rinse your mouth with water and then spit out the water.

Combat your COPD

Your strategy for the next 5 days to stay well:

1. **Finish your tablets**
   - Finish your medicine even if you are feeling better
   - **Azithromycin** (antibiotic) fights infection
     - Not prescribed
     - Take with food every day for 5 days
     - Side effects include nausea, diarrhea
   - **Prednisone** (steroid) reduces inflammation
     - Not prescribed
     - Take with food every day for 5 days
     - Side effects include nausea, dizziness

2. **Keep using your inhalers**
   - **Controller inhaler**
     - These inhalers help prevent future flare-ups.
   - **Rescue inhaler**
     - These inhalers help you breathe better during a flare-up.

3. **See your doctor**
   - To reach your clinic, call: (888) 569-5282. Your clinic is:
     - Adam Benjamin, Jr.  
     - Auburn-Gresham  
     - Chicago Heights  
     - Lakeside  
     - Green clinic  
     - Blue clinic  
     - Gold clinic  
     - Red clinic  
     - BOLD clinic  

   - Date  
   - Appointment time
When to step up your COPD care

I feel normal

Mild: Use your controller inhaler
- Symbicort (budesonide + formoterol)
  2 puffs in the morning
  2 puffs at night
- Spiriva (tiotropium bromide)
  2 puffs in the morning
- Other _____ puffs in the AM | PM

Keep using controller inhaler
This helps prevent future flare-ups. Use every day as prescribed, no matter how you feel.

Moderate: Use your rescue inhaler
- ProAir (albuterol)
  2 puffs every 4–6 hours when needed

Keep using rescue inhaler
every 4–6 hours as needed
This helps you breathe better during flare-ups. Use when you need extra relief.

Combivent (albuterol + ipratropium)
2 puffs every 4–6 hours when needed
- Other _____ puffs in the AM | PM

Keep using controller inhaler

Keep using rescue inhaler
every 4–6 hours as needed

I feel worse than normal

Severe: Call your doctor
If your inhalers don’t help, these symptoms can be serious. Call your doctor right away.

Moderate: Use your rescue inhaler
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Other _____ puffs in the AM | PM

Keep using controller inhaler

Keep using rescue inhaler
every 4–6 hours as needed

I feel much worse than normal

Very Severe: Call 911
If you feel much worse or have any of these symptoms, call 911.
Or go to the VA right away
VA emergency number: 312.569.6241

Severe: Call your doctor
If your inhalers don’t help, these symptoms can be serious. Call your doctor right away.

I feel normal (after activity)

Moderate: Use your rescue inhaler
- ProAir (albuterol)
  2 puffs every 4–6 hours when needed
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