

# Having nebuliser therapy at home

## Respiratory Physiology Unit

Information for Patients

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### Introduction

A nebuliser is a device that turns a liquid containing medication into a fine mist that you can breathe into your lungs via a mask or a mouthpiece.

It is an effective way in which drugs can be administered directly to the lungs, to treat or relieve symptoms of certain respiratory conditions. It can also be used for patients who are unable to use a handheld inhaler, or who need nebulised antibiotics for various conditions.

The equipment you have been given will allow you to have nebuliser therapy at home.

### What advice should I follow at home?

It is important to keep the machine clean and dust free.

If you have any problems with the equipment please telephone **0116 258 3419** during opening hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm), where a member of staff will be available to help you. If the equipment fails outside these hours and you are unable to manage with just your inhalers until the next working day, you must contact your GP.

**Important: Always keep a spare nebuliser kit. If you use salbutamol nebules in your nebuliser also make sure you have a salbutamol inhaler and spacer device as standby medication, just in case the nebuliser machine stops working.**

### Your medication

You will need to contact your GP for repeat prescriptions.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

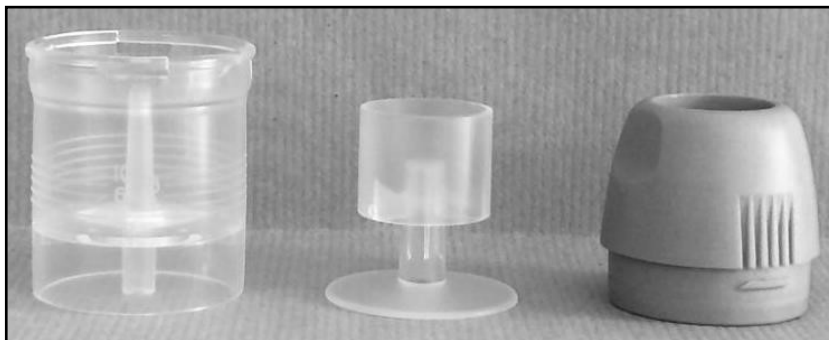
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## What equipment have I been given?

The type of nebuliser you have been loaned uses compressed air to form the mist. It has the following parts:

- **Compressor** - the machine is the power source that compresses the air. This compressed air breaks the liquid medication down into tiny droplets (a mist) that you breathe in.
- **Nebuliser kit** - this includes a nebulising chamber, the tubing and either a face mask or mouthpiece (whichever you prefer).

The nebulising chamber has 3 parts as shown below:



Base

Baffle

Screw top

## How do I take my medication using the nebuliser?

1. Remove the screw top of the nebulising chamber and make sure the baffle is correctly positioned in the base.
2. Squeeze the prescribed dose of your medication into the base.



3. Screw the top on firmly.



4. Push one end of the tubing onto the central spigot of the chamber and the other end onto the machine outlet.



5. Push either the mask or mouthpiece into the screw top.

6. Place the mask comfortably onto your face, or the mouthpiece into your mouth, making sure not to cover the ventilation holes.

7. Switch on the machine and sit quietly. Breathe normally but take an occasional deep breath, until treatment is finished.

It will be finished when there is no more mist, even after tapping the chamber.

8. When treatment is complete, disconnect the tubing, dismantle the kit and follow the cleaning instructions carefully.



## Cleaning instructions

In order that your nebuliser kit continues to fully deliver your medication effectively, it is important that it is cleaned regularly and correctly. The medication you use is mixed with saline which can crystallise and block the jet holes if it is not washed out properly after each use.

- After each use, the nebulising chamber should be taken apart and all 3 parts washed thoroughly in very hot, slightly soapy water (washing-up liquid is best). They should be rinsed in hot clean water and left to dry naturally, preferably covered to protect from dust.
- Occasionally it is advisable to reassemble the nebulising chamber, connect to the compressor and switch on for a few seconds to blow the jet holes clear.
- Once a week it is necessary for the nebulising chamber to be sterilised with Milton or a similar sterilising solution. Make up a solution and immerse the 3 parts for about 20 minutes. Rinse carefully in running water and leave to dry naturally.

**Important:** Do not wash or allow any water to enter the tubing; this **must** remain dry.

**If these cleaning instructions are not followed carefully, you may find the nebuliser unit will eventually produce little or no mist, or your medication will take much longer to turn into a mist.**

## How often does the machine need to be serviced?

You will need to bring the compressor to the Respiratory Physiology Unit once a year for a pressure check and filter change.

## Returning the equipment when it is no longer needed

When you no longer need the equipment please make sure it is returned to the Respiratory Physiology Unit at Glenfield Hospital.

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