

Let's Talk About...

Nebulizers

What is a nebulizer?

A nebulizer is a machine that uses forced air to turn medicine into a fine mist. A person then breathes the mist into their lungs. The medicine opens the breathing tubes in the lungs so the person can breathe better.

A nebulizer has four parts:

- A compressed air machine
- A cup to hold the medicine
- A thin plastic tube from the compressed air machine to the medicine's cup
- A mouthpiece or face mask to help breathe in the mist

Why do I need a nebulizer?

The nebulizer helps your child receive as much of the medicine as possible. For some people and some medicines, a nebulizer is the best way to receive inhaled medicine.

How do I use a nebulizer?

Your healthcare provider will give you specific instructions for your nebulizer. Here are some general instructions:

- 1 Fill the medicine cup with the amount of medicine prescribed.
- 2 Connect the tubing of the machine.
- 3 Have your child sit upright so they can take deep breaths.
- 4 While you hold the medicine cup upright, put the mouthpiece in your child's mouth. If your child is too young for the mouthpiece, place the mask on your child's face.



- 5 Turn the machine on.
- 6 Have your child breathe deeply and slowly through their mouth.
- 7 If the medicine begins to sputter before it is used up, tap the medicine cup.

How can I help my child adjust to a nebulizer with a mask?

Let your child play with the mask and practice. Have your child place the mask over their face, or on your face or a doll's. When appropriate, encourage your child to hold the mask during the treatment.

If your child does not hold still while using the mask, you can give them a small incentive (like a treat). You can also distract them with music, a story or a toy. If this does not work, you may need to gently hold your child while they receive their treatment.

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