



Many people living with COPD or other lung disease can benefit from using a nebulizer to help get inhaled medication deep into the lungs where it's needed most. If you and your healthcare provider agree that using a nebulizer is a good choice for you, learning how to use your device and clean it properly is important to ensure that your medicines are most effective.

Before you start to use your nebulizer, be sure to read the manufacturer instructions, as machines differ.



Assemble

The nebulizer itself has 3 parts: a medicine cup, cap, and mask or mouthpiece. If you have a jet nebulizer, it also comes with a compressor and tubing.

1. Always wash your hands before you start!
2. Unscrew the cap on the medication and carefully pour the correct dose into the medicine cup.
3. Secure the cap to the medicine cup.
4. Attach the mouthpiece or mask.
5. Connect one end of the tubing to the compressor and the other to the medicine cup.
6. Plug in the compressor and turn it on.
A mist should start to appear out of the mouthpiece or facemask.



Breathe

When you have the nebulizer running and producing a mist, you are ready for your breathing treatment.

1. Place the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips or secure the mask over your face.
2. Sit in an upright relaxed position and breathe normally through your mouth.
3. Hold the nebulizer in the position recommended by the manufacture. Jet nebulizers call for an upright position during use, but some other types of nebulizers have different requirements.
4. Continue breathing normally until all the medicine is gone from the cup or you no longer see any mist.

Clean

Cleaning your nebulizer every time you use it is a necessary part of your treatment.

1. After each treatment, disassemble and wash the nebulizer parts in warm soapy water or in the dishwasher.
2. Rinse and let the pieces air dry and store in clean dry place.
3. Once a week soak them in a vinegar solution for 30 to 60 minutes to disinfect them.
4. The tubing and compressor for a jet nebulizer should never be put into water. They can be wiped with a damp soapy towel or disinfectant wipe if they get soiled.



For more information and support from the American Lung Association, visit [Lung.org/nebulizer](https://lung.org/nebulizer) to view the step-by-step videos ***How To Properly Use a Nebulizer*** and ***How To Properly Clean A Nebulizer***.

You can also call the Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA to get free advice from an experienced nurse or respiratory therapist.

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