



Taking Care of Your New HFA Asthma Inhaler





Asthma inhalers have recently been changed. The chemical used to push the medicine out of the inhaler (the propellant) has been switched from chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) to a more environmentally friendly substance called hydrofluoroalkane (HFA). While CFC is not harmful to people, the chemical does disrupt the ozone layer and must be removed from all inhalers by the end of 2008.





You may have already received your new HFA inhaler. The medicine in the new HFA inhaler is exactly the same as the old CFC inhaler, but there are a few slight differences:



- The new HFA inhaler may deliver a spray that has a different taste and smell to it.
- The sensation of the HFA spray in your mouth and throat may feel less forceful. Some people report the mist as having a gentler and warmer feel to it.
- The medication canister of the HFA inhaler **MUST** stay dry! Never use the “float test” to check the amount of medicine left in the inhaler.
- HFA inhalers need special care in order to make sure that they work properly and deliver the correct amount of asthma medication.
 - Each HFA inhaler has special instructions for “priming” or getting the inhaler ready to use when it is new or has not been used in awhile. See the chart below or the information that came with your inhaler for specific instructions.
 - Each HFA inhaler has specific cleaning instructions for the plastic actuator/mouthpiece to prevent build-up and blockage. See the chart below or the information that came with your inhaler for specific instructions.

Your new environmentally friendly HFA asthma inhaler needs special care in order to make sure that it works properly.

Brand Name (generic name)	Image	Priming Instructions – to prepare the inhaler before FIRST USE	Mouthpiece Weekly Cleaning Instructions
ProAir HFA (albuterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>three</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the above priming procedure before using ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than two weeks.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week. Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>
Proventil HFA (albuterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the above priming procedure before using ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than two weeks.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week. Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>

Brand Name (generic name)	Image	Priming Instructions – to prepare the inhaler before FIRST USE	Mouthpiece Weekly Cleaning Instructions
Ventolin HFA (albuterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face. After the first priming, the counter should read “200.”</p> <p>Repeat the above priming procedure before using ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than two weeks OR if the inhaler is dropped.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Open the mouthpiece cap. Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week.</p> <p>Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>
Xopenex HFA (levalbuterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the above priming procedure before using ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than three days.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Remove the mouthpiece cap. Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week.</p> <p>Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>
Maxair Autohaler (pirbuterol)		<p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>2 (two)</u> “test sprays”. To do this, push the white test fire slide on the BOTTOM of the Autohaler in the direction indicated by the arrow.</p> <p>Repeat the above priming procedure before using, ONLY if the inhaler has not been used in 48 hours or two days.</p>	<p>Remove mouthpiece cover. Turn Autohaler upside down. Wipe mouthpiece with a clean, dry cloth.</p> <p>Use a dry cotton swab to clean the small circular opening where the medicine sprays out of the canister.</p>
Advair HFA (fluticasone/ salmeterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with <u>two</u> sprays ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than four weeks OR if the inhaler is dropped.</p>	<p>DO NOT remove the medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Remove the mouthpiece cap. Do not take the canister out of the plastic actuator. Use a cotton swab dampened with water to clean the small circular opening where the medicine sprays out of the canister. Repeat with a clean, water-dampened swab.</p> <p>Wipe the inside of the mouthpiece with a clean tissue dampened with water. Air dry overnight.</p>

Brand Name (generic name)	Image	Priming Instructions – to prepare the inhaler before FIRST USE	Mouthpiece Weekly Cleaning Instructions
Alvesco (ciclesonide)		<p>Does not need to be shaken.</p> <p>Remove cap. Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing 3 (three) “test sprays” into the air, away from the face. After the first priming, the counter should read 60.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with 3 (three) sprays, ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than 10 days.</p>	<p><u>Keep Dry!</u> Do not wash or put any part of the inhaler in water.</p> <p>The mouthpiece of the inhaler should be cleaned weekly with a clean, dry tissue or cloth.</p>
Atrovent HFA (ipratropium)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>two</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with <u>two</u> sprays ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than three days.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Open the mouthpiece cap. Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week.</p> <p>Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>
Flovent HFA (fluticasone)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face. After the first priming the counter should read “120.”</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with <u>one</u> spray ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than seven days OR if the inhaler is dropped.</p>	<p>DO NOT remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Remove the mouthpiece cap. Do not take the canister out of the plastic actuator. Use a cotton swab dampened with water to clean the small circular opening where the medicine sprays out of the canister. Repeat with a clean, water-dampened swab.</p> <p>Wipe the inside of the mouthpiece with a clean tissue dampened with water. Air dry overnight.</p>
QVAR (beclomethasone)		<p>Does not need to be shaken.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing 2 (two) “test sprays” into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with 2 (two) sprays ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than 10 days.</p>	<p><u>Keep Dry!</u> Do not wash or put any part of the inhaler in water.</p> <p>The mouthpiece of the inhaler should be cleaned weekly with a clean, dry tissue or cloth.</p>

Brand Name (generic name)	Image	Priming Instructions – to prepare the inhaler before FIRST USE	Mouthpiece Weekly Cleaning Instructions
Symbicort HFA (budesonide/ formoterol)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>two</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with <u>two</u> sprays ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than four weeks OR if the inhaler is dropped.</p>	<p>Do not take the inhaler apart! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Remove mouthpiece cap. Clean the white mouthpiece of the inhaler every seven days.</p> <p>Wipe the inside and outside of the white mouthpiece opening with a clean, dry cloth. Replace the mouthpiece cover.</p>
Tilade CFC-Free (nedocromil)		<p>Shake the inhaler well.</p> <p>Prime the inhaler before using for the first time by releasing <u>four</u> test sprays into the air, away from the face.</p> <p>Repeat the priming procedure with <u>one</u> or <u>two</u> sprays ONLY if the inhaler has not been used for more than three days.</p>	<p>Remove medication canister! Never get the canister wet.</p> <p>Open the mouthpiece cap. Clean the plastic mouthpiece by running warm water through the top to the bottom for 30 seconds at least once a week.</p> <p>Shake to remove excess water, and then air-dry thoroughly (such as overnight).</p>