



**The Dudley Group**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Short term nebuliser loan

## **Lung Function Unit** Patient Information Leaflet

## Introduction

**Dudley Respiratory Assessment Service** will loan you a nebuliser to use as directed by your doctor or nurse. This should help to relieve breathlessness. This treatment is for the short term and will only need to be used until your condition improves.

## What is a nebuliser?

It is a machine to deliver medication to the lungs by turning it into a mist which can be inhaled through a face mask or mouthpiece.

## What are the benefits?

It should relieve breathlessness.

## What does the home nebuliser system include?

It includes the following:

### A nebuliser

The chamber where the medication is poured.

### A compressor

The machine used for nebulisation. Has a power lead.

### Tubing

This attaches the nebuliser chamber to the compressor machine.

### A mask or mouthpiece

This attaches to the top of the nebuliser chamber. This is worn or held by you.

## How do I use the nebuliser system?

- Connect the power lead into the compressor machine and plug it into the mains supply.
- Wash and dry your hands thoroughly.
- Connect the nebuliser to the compressor with the tubing provided.
- The medication that has been prescribed for you is supplied in small plastic bottles called nebules. These are opened by twisting off the top.
- Squeeze the entire contents of one nebule into the nebuliser.

- Connect the mouthpiece or mask to the top of the nebuliser chamber.
- Switch on the compressor. A fine mist will be produced for you to breathe in.
- Start breathing in the medication. **Make sure you breathe normally.**
- Delivery usually takes between seven to 15 minutes, depending on the type of machine and medication.

## How do I clean it?

In order to benefit fully from the nebuliser system, you will need to clean the nebuliser and the mask or mouthpiece after each time you use it.

Before handling the nebuliser and mask or mouthpiece, always wash your hands thoroughly.

- Unplug the machine from the power supply.
- Throw away any medication left in nebuliser chamber.
- Remove the tubing and mask or mouthpiece. Unscrew the nebuliser. Take care not to lose the centre 'baffle'.
- Wash the nebuliser and mask or mouthpiece in warm water with a little detergent (washing up liquid).
- Rinse in clean warm water and allow to dry thoroughly until you next need to use them.
- Store in a clean dry place.
- Before you next use the system, run the machine empty for a few moments before you put the medication into the chamber. This clears the jet nozzles.

## Safety precautions

- Always disconnect the system from the electricity supply before cleaning.
- Never use the system where it may come into contact with water.
- Never block the air grills on the side of the device.
- Always keep the electrical leads away from heated surfaces.
- Put the compressor on a clean surface. Do not put it on carpet where fibres may be drawn into the unit when it is being used.
- Avoid using the system in a room where people smoke.

## What are the risks?

The possible risks of the medication you will use in the nebuliser are as follows:

### Salbutamol (Ventolin) and terbutaline (Bricanyl)

Side effects that may occur include fine tremors (shakes), nervous tension, headaches, heart palpitations and a raised heartbeat. Only very occasionally, muscle cramps and low potassium levels can occur. A low level of potassium can cause an irregular heartbeat.

### Ipratropium bromide (Atrovent)

Side effects may include a dry mouth, constipation and, rarely, urine retention.

### Combivent

Please note that Combivent is a combined treatment of ipratropium bromide and salbutamol.

## What if I am using oxygen therapy?

If you are using oxygen therapy through a tube positioned under your nose (a nasal cannula), you can leave your oxygen on whilst using your nebuliser.

## What if I have any problems?

**Respiratory helpline: 01384 244383** (8am to 7pm, Monday to Friday)

If you have any queries using the nebuliser system, or think you may be experiencing troublesome side effects, please call the respiratory helpline or speak to the Dudley Respiratory Assessment Service (DRAS) nurse when you have a home visit.

If your condition appears to be getting worse, please contact the respiratory helpline, your GP or in an emergency, go to your nearest Emergency Department.

**You should not need to use your nebuliser more than six times within a 24 hour period.**

**If you need to use it more than this, please seek urgent medical advice.**

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

The respiratory helpline on 01384 244383 (8am to 7pm, Monday to Friday)

Respiratory technicians on 01384 456111 ext. 3167 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/respiratory-medicine/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [dgft.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:dgft.patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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