

Nebulizer treatments

What is a nebulizer treatment?

A nebulizer treatment (“neb”) gives medicine as a fine mist that is breathed into the lungs. The medicine is made into mist form by using an air compressor and a nebulizer (“neb cup”). Nebbs must be given as instructed in order for them to work.

Often medicines can be mixed together in a neb. If you are giving more than one medicine, check with the doctor or pharmacist about mixing the medicines together.

How do I prepare my child?

Some children may not like the neb treatment at first but will get used to it after a while. Some ways to help your child cope with nebs at home are:

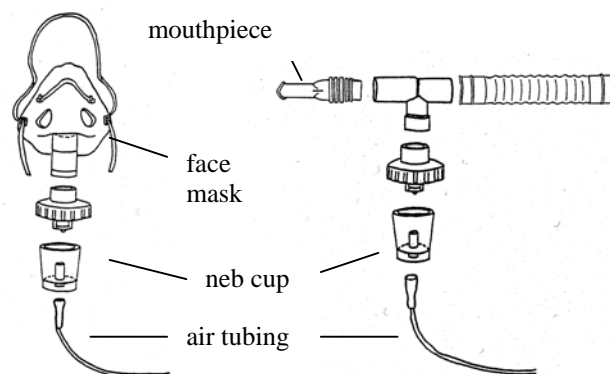
- Explain what you are going to do before you do it.
- Have a routine with the nebs.
- Hold the child in your lap or play with a toy during the treatment.
- Let your child choose a distraction, such as reading a book together, rocking with a parent, or listening to music.
- Let your child play with the mask and a doll or stuffed animal between treatments.
- Let your child help get the treatment ready, get a book to read, or hold the mask.

How do I set up the neb treatment?

1. Take the air compressor out of its carrying case, and place it on a level surface. It may vibrate during use, so keep it away from the edge of the table, and away from water. Keep it off the floor for good air circulation and to keep the filter clean longer.
2. Plug it into a 3-prong outlet.
3. Wash your hands.
4. Check the medicine label. If it is pre-mixed, pour it into the neb cup, and **do not** dilute it.
 - If it is not pre-mixed, put normal saline into the neb cup first, and add the prescribed amount of medicine.
5. Put the top on the neb cup and attach a face-mask or mouthpiece depending on the age of the child.

For infants and young children

For older children and teens



6. Connect one end of the air tubing to the compressor and the other to the bottom of the neb cup.

How do I give the neb?

1. Turn on the compressor.
2. Hold the neb cup in an upright position for the whole treatment.

Face mask - if the mask bothers your child, you do not have to put the strap over the head. You can start with the face-mask off of the face and move it closer gradually until the mask is over the mouth and nose.

Mouthpiece - place it over the tongue and between the teeth. You should be able to see the mist at the opposite end disappear as the medicine is inhaled. Pinching the nose can help to remember to breathe in through the mouth.

3. Continue until all of the medicine is gone from the neb cup (about 10 minutes). You will hear a sputter and see less mist coming out. When this happens, tap on the neb cup gently to get the rest of the medicine back to the bottom of the neb cup.
4. After the treatment:
 - Take the neb cup apart.
 - Shake out the cup.
 - Put in a clean, dry place.
5. Wash your child's face.
6. Wash your hands.

How should I care for the equipment?

Is the neb cup for long- or short-term use? Cleaning methods vary; check the package to see which type you have. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations or the instructions below.

Clean the neb cup **at least** once a day. **Do not** put the parts together or store them in a closed container until completely dry. When dry, keep the neb cup in a clean, dry, covered place.

Reusable nebulizer cups

1. Take apart the neb cup.
2. Wash parts in warm soapy water, using liquid dish soap or Dreft® soap (these tend to leave less residue). Use a paper towel or small brush to clean parts well.
3. Rinse parts in clean, warm water.
4. Disinfect parts in one of these ways:
 - Put parts in a pan and cover with tap water. Boil 5 minutes.
 - Put parts in a bowl of water and microwave for 5 minutes.
5. Let cool. Remove parts from water, place on clean paper towels, and let them air dry.

or: Place the parts in the top rack of a dishwasher. Remove parts when the cycle is complete, and place on clean paper towels until dry. There is no need to disinfect parts if cleaned in the dishwasher.

Short-term or disposable nebulizer cups

1. Take apart the neb cup.
2. Wash parts in warm soapy water, using liquid dish soap or Dreft® soap (these tend to leave less residue). Use a paper towel or small brush to clean parts well. Do not put these parts in a dishwasher or boiling water.
3. Rinse with tap water.

4. Disinfect parts by soaking in 70% rubbing alcohol for 5 minutes.
5. Rinse parts with sterile water.
6. Place the parts on clean paper towels, and air-dry.

To make sterile water, boil tap water for 5 minutes. Discard and make new sterile water every day.

When you open the package, label the neb cup with the date. Discard it after 2 weeks, if used daily.

Aerosol mask

Wash the mask with warm soapy water, rinse with warm tap water, and wipe dry.

Air compressor

There are many types. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not wash or rinse the air tubing.

Problem-solving

If mist coming out of the machine is poor:

1. Check that the air tubing is not kinked, cracked, or loosely connected on either end. Replace the tubing if needed.
2. Check the neb cup for cracks. If it leaks at the connection, make sure it is screwed together tightly.
 - If it is cracked or continues to leak, replace it.
3. If you have questions, call the supply company.

Always keep an extra neb cup, tubing, and set of attachments on hand.

If the compressor does not turn on:

1. Check whether it is plugged in.
2. Check the outlet to see if it is working.
3. If the compressor is cold, let it warm to room temperature.
4. If it still does not work, call the supply company.

Who should I call for help?

Call the clinic if:

- You or your child have problems with the neb treatments or the side effects of the medicine.
- The neb treatments are not helping your child's breathing.
- Your child needs extra treatments for more than 12 to 24 hours.

Call the equipment company (see phone number on your compressor) if:

- You need to order supplies.
- The compressor does not work.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call the clinic.

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our Web site: www.childrensmn.org.

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