

Education for Inhaler Techniques

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Asthma is a chronic airway disease caused by allergic inflammation of the bronchial tree. It is common in both children and adults worldwide and estimated prevalence of asthma is about 5 to 10% in general population. Asthma is characterized with hyperreactive airway sensitive to various environmental stimuli, which results in asthma symptoms, including coughing, shortness of breath, wheezing and chest tightness.

Asthma medications can be divided into controller and relievers. Controller medications include inhaled steroids and should be used regularly daily base to reduce airway inflammation even when patient does not have symptom. The effect appears to be slow, but more effective than using just reliever medication for long-term control of persistent asthma. Reliever medications include short-acting bronchodilators and can be used as needed only when the asthma symptoms suddenly get worse.

Asthma medications include several types such as inhaler and oral medications. The inhaler medication is delivered directly to the respiratory tract, which can produce more powerful effect with smaller amount. Generally, the effect can be more rapid and side effect is lesser than oral medication. Therefore, it is important to educate patients to use inhaler medication optimally.

Depending on asthma severity, patient condition, and availability of inhaler, the type, dose, and frequency of inhaler use may vary. The proper use of prescribed inhaler is very important, so that the patient should learn how to use it repeatedly until they can use it skillfully. It is also important to educate the importance of inhaler use as well as how to use. Although patients know the adequate method of using inhaler, their adherence may decrease over time if they are not fully aware of the importance of using inhaler. Thus, steady education of importance of inhaler use is key to asthma patient care.

The basic technique for using inhaler is as followings:

1. Prepare adequately according to the type of inhaler.
2. Breathe out before inhalation.

3. Tilt your head 15 degrees upward, place the inhaler in your mouth and breath in.

(MDI: slowly and deeply for 4–5 seconds, DPI : strongly and deeply)

4. Remove the inhaler from your mouth and hold your breath for 5–10 seconds.

5. If the inhaler contains steroid, rinse your mouth.