



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Nebulisers

Information for patients,
relatives and carers

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

This leaflet is for patients, relatives and carers and explains how to use and look after a nebuliser.

What is a nebuliser?

A nebuliser is a machine that can deliver drugs to the lungs for the treatment of lung disease. It has a different method of delivering respiratory medication.

The machine consists of a compressor, which drives air through the nebuliser chamber to turn the medication into a fine mist that can be inhaled through the mouthpiece or mask. The standard machines can be used wherever there is an electricity point, but portable machines with their own re-chargeable batteries and adapters for in-car use are available at a higher cost if you choose to purchase one.

How does it work?

The medication is supplied in plastic vials that can easily be opened by twisting the top. The medication is then emptied into the chamber, which is then connected to the machine via a tube. When the machine is switched on, a fine mist will be produced that you can breathe in, using gentle, relaxed breathing.

Ordering your medication

The doctor will prescribe the medication you need to use through your nebuliser. Your doctor or nurse will tell you how often you need to use them. It is important to make sure you always have an adequate supply of the medication. Repeat prescriptions can be obtained from your general practitioner (GP).

Caring for your nebuliser?

The mouthpiece and chamber should, ideally, be washed thoroughly after each use, but at least once a day, in warm, soapy water, rinsed and air dried. It is important to do this as it prevents the growth of bacteria in the chamber.

Blow air from the compressor through the tubing to clear the chamber – this avoids the build up of deposits. Do not immerse the tubing in water. Wipe the compressor and tubing once a week with a damp cloth, after disconnecting the electricity supply. Once a week the chamber may be soaked in a sterilising solution, such as Milton.

New nebulisers do not need to be serviced for three years; thereafter they should be serviced annually. If you have bought your own, you will need to contact the supplier for details. You will be advised how often you need to replace your particular nebuliser chamber, mask/mouthpiece and filter.

Availability

Nebulisers are available to purchase with an aftercare package from most leading pharmacies.

Short term loans of nebulisers may be available via the equipment loan library. This can be organised via the respiratory nurse or district nurse.

Please do not hesitate to contact the department if you have any problems or queries or alternatively you can contact your GP.

Contacting us

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To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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