Talking About Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

TAKE THE MEDICINE YOUR DOCTOR PRESCRIBES

COPD treatment can include 2 kinds of therapy. Your doctor may give you 2 types of medicine. They are called rescue and maintenance.

Rescue therapy: short-acting medicine
- Is taken as needed to help you catch your breath when your breathing suddenly gets worse
- Helps you breathe better fast. Lasts for about 4 to 6 hours

Maintenance therapy: long-acting medicine
- Is taken every day to help manage your COPD
- May help reduce the need for rescue medicine
- Some may prevent or reduce flare-ups (worsening of symptoms) over time
- Lasts from 6 to 24 hours
- Should be taken even when you are breathing better so you can keep breathing better
- Must be taken every day to deliver full, long-term effects. Breathing better happens over time
- Some are available without steroids, while some have steroids

Take your rescue medicine only when you need it. But take your maintenance medicine every day, even if you are feeling and breathing well.
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INHALERS AND NEBULIZERS

Most COPD medicines are delivered using an inhaler.

Currently, COPD medicine can be taken using 4 different types of inhalers: pressurized metered dose inhalers, dry powder inhalers, a slow spray inhaler, and nebulizers.

Though all inhalers use the same principle, they are not all the same. For example, some need to be shaken and others do not.

• Dry powder inhalers deliver the medicine when you breathe in
• Metered dose inhalers and a slow spray inhaler deliver the medicine when you press and breathe in. They also need to be primed before first use
• A nebulizer is a small machine that turns a liquid medicine into a mist. You inhale the mist through a mask

Talk with your doctor about the different inhalers available and the one that is best for you.

Using an inhaler takes some practice, so talk with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns.