




SPACER DEVICES IN CHILDREN: ENSURING THE RIGHT DEVICE FOR THE RIGHT AGE

Spacer devices are recommended for use with pressurised metered dose inhalers (pMDIs) in all age groups.

A face mask is required until a child can breathe reproducibly using the spacer mouthpiece, however from approximately 3 years of age children should be able to competently use a spacer without a mask.

As children grow the spacer device +/- face mask they require will change. Using the wrong device for their size and stage of development may mean they are not getting the full dose of their asthma medication.

Aerochamber Plus® and Volumatic® spacers are two of the most commonly prescribed in SWL and have the following age recommendations:

<p>Aerochamber Plus® Small (Infant) Mask</p>  <p>0-18 months £8.44</p>	<p>Aerochamber Plus® Medium (Child) Mask</p>  <p>1-5 years £8.44</p>	<p>Aerochamber Plus® Mouthpiece</p>  <p>5+ years £5.06</p>
<p>Volumatic® Paediatric Mask</p>  <p>0+ years £6.83</p>		<p>Volumatic®</p>  <p>3+ years £3.88</p>

Some older children and adults may need a spacer with a mask, for example learning disability patients or those with complex physical needs. It is important to ensure the correct sized mask is supplied (see above). A blue Aerochamber Plus® Large (Adult) with mask is available for patients aged 5 years and over who are unable to use a mouthpiece. For all other spacer brands, licensing information and inhaler compatibility please refer to individual manufacturer product information and rightbreathe.com for further information.

Actions for clinicians:

- When prescribing spacers for use in children over the age of 3, consider prescribing a spacer with a mouthpiece unless there are specific concerns about their ability to use a mouthpiece.
- If a spacer with a mask is required in older children, ensure the correct size mask is supplied.
- Ensure patients and their carers are given clear instructions on how to use their inhaler and spacer. Asthma UK have a wide range of videos which can be used for patient education:
 - [How to use a spacer with tidal breathing \(5-breaths technique\)](#)
 - [How to use a spacer with a mask for a baby or child](#)
 - [How to use a spacer without a mask for a child](#)
- Give patients information on [how to look after their spacer devices](#). Remind them to clean their spacers before the first use (following manufacturer's instructions) and to replace their spacers every 6-12 months.