

**AEROSOL PUFFER**

# WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH INHALERS?

1 aerosol puffer can have a carbon footprint up to a **170 km car journey**

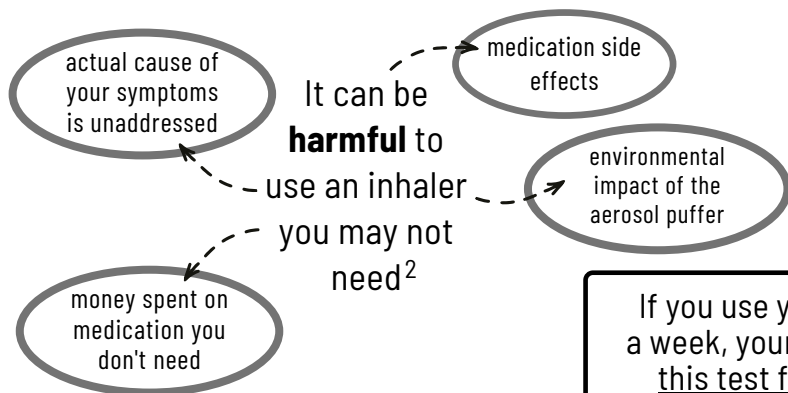


The aerosols that push out the medication from these types of puffers are **harmful greenhouse gases**<sup>1</sup>

Do you want to help **reduce the impact** that aerosol puffers have on the environment?

# 1

Talk with your health care provider to **make sure you have been tested** for asthma or COPD



About **1 in 4** Canadian adults who use asthma inhalers **do not actually have asthma**. Watch [this video](#)\* to learn more about the importance of confirming your diagnosis.<sup>3</sup>

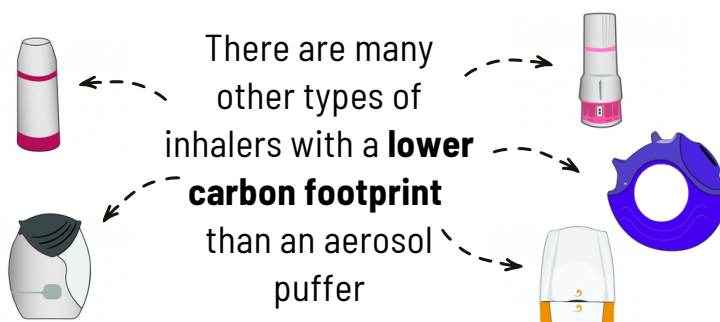
If you use your **blue reliever inhaler** 3 or more times a week, your asthma may not be well-controlled. Take [this test from Asthma Canada](#)\*\* to find out more.



# 2

Ask your health care provider if **other lower carbon inhalers** are right for you

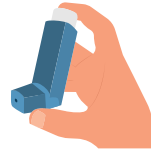
The carbon footprint of these alternatives can be **10 times smaller** than an aerosol puffer.<sup>1</sup>



Most of these alternatives are called **dry powder inhalers** - they have no aerosol and they release the medication as you **breathe in**. These inhalers have the same medications **to treat your condition**.<sup>4</sup>

# 3 Review your technique with your health care provider to make sure you are **using your inhaler the right way**

Review videos showing the correct technique for your inhaler\*\*\*



**7 out of 10** inhalers are thrown away before they are actually empty.<sup>6</sup>

Use your inhaler **correctly** to make sure you:

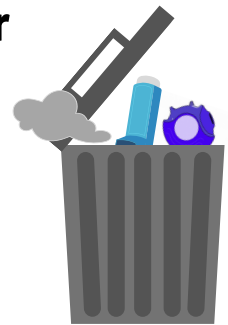
- get the **most benefit** from your medication,
- use **all the medication** in your inhaler, and
- avoid **releasing aerosol into the air** instead of inhaling it, if you use an aerosol puffer.<sup>5</sup>

Many dry powder inhalers have **dose counters**, which can make it easier to tell how much medication you have left.



# 4 Ask your clinic or pharmacy if they have a **recycling or disposal program**.

Do not throw your inhaler into household garbage or recycling. When thrown into the garbage for landfill, aerosol puffers can **release harmful greenhouse gases** into the environment.<sup>5</sup>



Returning your inhaler to your pharmacy to be recycled or incinerated can save the equivalent of up to



8 litres of gasoline.<sup>5</sup>

## Links to learn more

\* Why is confirming your diagnosis important? Watch this video:

[choosingwiselycanada.org/pamphlet/lets-clear-the-air-video/](https://choosingwiselycanada.org/pamphlet/lets-clear-the-air-video/)

\*\* Blue reliever inhaler test from Asthma Canada: [rateyourreliance.ca](http://rateyourreliance.ca)

\*\*\* Review how to use your inhaler correctly: [cascadescanada.ca/yourinhaler](http://cascadescanada.ca/yourinhaler)

## References

1. Jeswani HK, Azapagic A. (2020). Environmental impacts of healthcare and pharmaceutical products: Influence of product design and consumer behaviour. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 253: 119860.
2. Let's Clear the Air. Choosing Wisely Canada. <https://choosingwiselycanada.org/airways/>
3. Aaron SD, Vandemheen KL, FitzGerald JM, et al. (2017) Reevaluation of Diagnosis in Adults With Physician Diagnosed Asthma. *JAMA*, 317(3):269-279.
4. Woodcock A, Janson C, Rees J, et al. (2022). Effects of switching from a metered dose inhaler to a dry powder inhaler on climate emissions and asthma control: post-hoc analysis. *Thorax*.
5. Wilkinson AJ, Braggins R, Steinbach I, Smith J. (2019). Costs of switching to low global warming potential inhalers. An economic and carbon footprint analysis of NHS prescription data in England. *BMJ Open*, 9(10).
6. Roome C, Bush O, Steinbach I, et al. (2021). 562 Reducing the environmental impact of inhaler use and disposal within paediatrics and the local community. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, 106: A41-A42.



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