



# State of Louisiana

## Louisiana Department of Health

### Office of the Surgeon General

[This *Standing Protocol* (SOP) is attached to and accompanies the “**Recognition of Albuterol as a Life-Saving Medication, Standing Order for the Distribution or Dispensing of Albuterol, and Standing Protocol for the Administration of Albuterol**” issued by the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of the Surgeon General on April 1, 2025.]

**Purpose of Albuterol:** Albuterol is a medication used for the purpose of being administered to any child or adult in Louisiana who is experiencing an acute asthma exacerbation.

**Training Requirements:**

Training must include the following:

- How to prevent, recognize, and manage an asthma exacerbation
- Indications, contraindications, and precautions related to albuterol
- Albuterol-inhaler management and administration techniques
- **Necessity of promptly calling 911 for further care of effected individual(s)**

*For more information on training and other entity-specific details, see the text of the Louisiana codes referenced in “Legislative Support.”*

**Indications:** Albuterol is indicated for the treatment of asthma exacerbation. An asthma exacerbation may also be referred to as an “asthma attack.”

**Asthma is a potentially life-threatening condition.** An asthma exacerbation is a flare-up of asthma symptoms that may include difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, coughing, and/or wheezing.

Left untreated, an asthma exacerbation can ultimately lead to death via respiratory and circulatory collapse.

An asthma exacerbation/attack may be difficult to differentiate from anaphylaxis. In such cases, both epinephrine (for anaphylaxis) and albuterol (for asthma exacerbation) should be administered (see Figure 1).

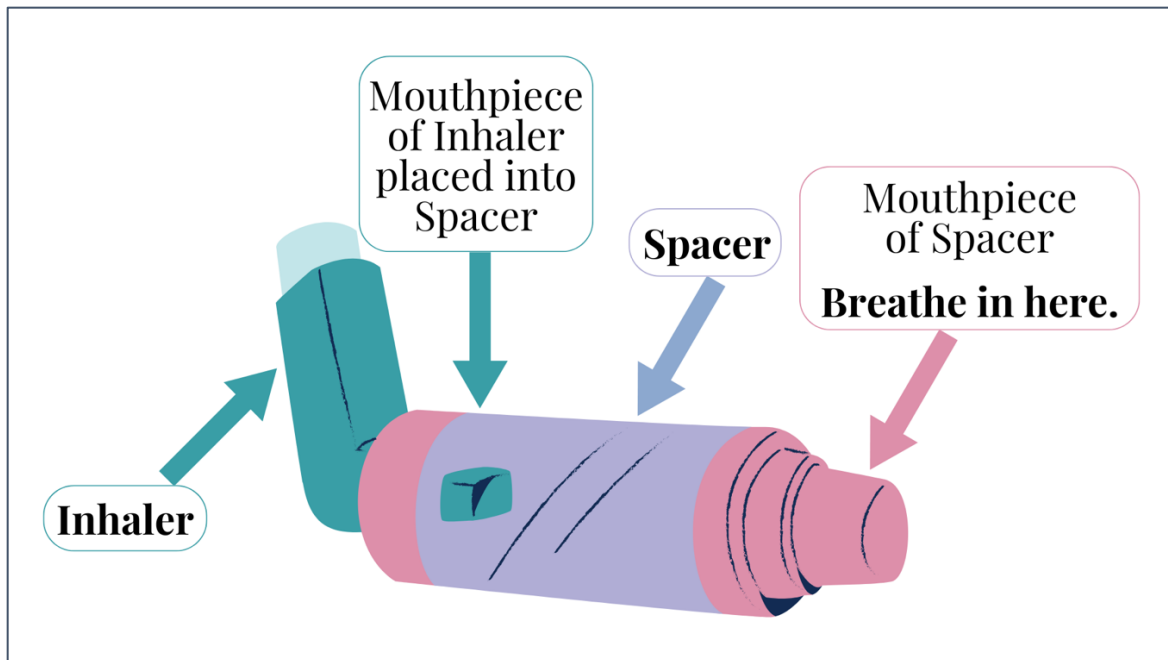


Figure 1. How to differentiate an asthma attack from anaphylaxis. When in doubt, treat both. *Figure used with permission from Code Ana.*

#### **Dosing:**

Albuterol is available as follows:

- Albuterol sulfate 90 mcg per actuation (puff) – this comes in the form of an inhaler
- Albuterol dosing is two puffs inhaled as needed for asthma exacerbation

#### **Storage and Availability**

Albuterol should be stored according to the manufacturer's instructions, which include being stored at room temperature and away from light, moisture, and heat. It should not be refrigerated or frozen.

Whenever possible, albuterol inhalers should be used with a spacer. This is ideal regardless of the age of the person experiencing the asthma exacerbation because spacers help the albuterol more efficiently reach the lungs in both children and adults.

**Recognition** of an asthma exacerbation may include the following:

- Difficulty breathing and/or discomfort with breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Coughing
- Wheezing

There is NO ABSOLUTE CONTRAINDICATION to administering albuterol to a child or adult experiencing an asthma exacerbation.

**Calling 911** as soon as possible is always the correct action.

### **PROTOCOL FOR ADMINISTERING ALBUTEROL VIA INHALER**

**Step 1:** Confirm signs and symptoms of an asthma exacerbation/attack

**Step 2:** Call **911** and administer albuterol as follows:

1. Connect albuterol inhaler to spacer.
2. Instruct the individual to breathe out.
3. Instruct the individual to place their mouth on the mouthpiece of the spacer, closing their lips around the mouthpiece.
4. Press down on the inhaler to activate the device once.
5. Instruct individual to breathe in slowly and deeply for 3-5 seconds, then hold their breath for 10 seconds, then gently breathe out and resume breathing normally.
6. After one minute, repeat 2-5.
7. Await arrival of EMS.