5 key points

1. Failure to use inhalers correctly reduces their benefit
2. Patients should be taught how to use their inhaler when they are first prescribed inhaled medication
3. Their technique should be checked at subsequent consultations
4. Individuals' abilities should be taken into account when selecting inhaler devices
5. Placebo inhalers can be useful to demonstrate correct inhaler technique

Training aids

Placebo inhalers, which are available from inhaler manufacturers, can help with demonstrating correct inhaler technique. It is important to note that these placebo devices are for single-person use only.

A range of devices is available to help train health professionals and patients. These include: 2Tone Trainer TurboTest, In-Check Dial, Mag-Flo inhaler flow indicator, Aerosol Inhalation Monitor, Inhalation Manager, SmartMist and Multimedia training tools (Lavorini et al, 2010).

Summary

If adherence with therapy is to be achieved, when selecting a suitable device it is important to take into account individuals’ ability to use inhalers as well as their attitude towards their disease, therapy and the acceptability of the selected device. Adherence and inhaler technique should be assessed at every consultation.

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References


For a Nursing Times Learning unit on arterial blood gases, go to nursingtimes.net/ABG2