

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
EMT TREATMENT PROTOCOLS

Respiratory Emergencies/Asthma

Perform the following immediately:

- Scene size-up and the initial assessment.
- Administer 100% oxygen using a non-rebreather delivery device at 15 liters/minute, unless the patient is unable to tolerate this device. If so, then administer oxygen using a nasal cannula at 6 liters/minute.
- Place the patient in a position of comfort.
- Ensure that advanced life support (ALS) has been requested and monitor response time.
- Obtain baseline vital signs and obtain the SAMPLE history.
- Conduct secondary assessment.

Initiate treatment if the following are present:

A chief complaint of difficulty breathing, the patient exhibits signs and symptoms of respiratory distress, the patient has his/her own prescribed handheld inhaler and/or nebulizer, and the patient is alert and physically able to use the device.

Therapy	Metered Dose Inhaler	Nebulizer
Medication source and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be prescribed to the patient. • Rescue inhalers only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be prescribed to the patient
Contraindications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not room temperature • Exceeded prescribed dose • Not alert • Expired • Not prescribed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expired • Not alert • Not prescribed
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the oxygen, have the patient exhale deeply, have the patient place the inhaler up to their lips (or the spacer up to their lips if available). Squeeze and inhale and hold his/her breath for as long as they can. Allow the patient to breath a few times before administering an additional dose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient is already utilizing their nebulizer. In keeping with not delaying transport, unplug the tubing for the nebulizer from the machine and plug it in to 6 LPM oxygen. The patient may finish their current nebulizer treatment ONLY. No additional treatments are permitted.

Document the time and amount of all administered doses of medication. Communicate this during transfer of care to ALS or receiving facility staff.

REMEMBER: WHEN QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ARISE, CONTACT MEDICAL CONTROL