



## Do you have asthma?

## Do you sometimes worry about the carbon footprint of your inhalers?

If so, please read on...

### Did you know?

ONE Ventolin Evohaler™ has a carbon footprint equivalent to 28kg of CO<sub>2</sub>



This is equivalent to a 175-mile journey in a car!

(Assumes car achieves 100gCO<sub>2</sub>/km.)





### A few things you can do to reduce the carbon footprint of your asthma treatment:

#### Make sure your asthma is well controlled


- Most people with asthma can be prescribed **Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (MART)** for regular treatment and extra help with their symptoms: [Maintenance and Reliever Therapy \(MART\) | Asthma + Lung UK](#)
- Adults and young people with occasional symptoms may be prescribed **AIR (anti-inflammatory reliever)** treatment plan. [AIR \(anti-inflammatory reliever\) | Asthma + Lung UK](#)
- **MART** and **AIR** treatment plans use **combination** inhalers that contain a steroid **PREVENTER** or **MAINTENANCE** medicine to **keep down inflammation** in your airways and a long- but also fast-acting bronchodilator **RELIEVER** medicine called formoterol to **keep your airways open**.
- If you have been prescribed **AIR** or **MART**, you **do not need a blue inhaler** anymore.
- If your **PREVENTER** and **RELIEVER** medication is in two separate inhalers, make sure you use your **PREVENTER** regularly. This can help keep your asthma under control. You **should only need ONE blue RELIEVER inhaler per year** (200 doses in one inhaler / 52 weeks per year = 4 or less puffs each week)
- If you find that you're experiencing asthma symptoms and needing to use your reliever/blue inhaler frequently (i.e., more than twice a week) this means your asthma is not well managed. This can lead to time off school or work, and more trips to GP surgeries and hospitals – all adding up to a higher carbon footprint.
- See your asthma nurse, GP, or pharmacist who can review your treatment plan and help you choose the most appropriate inhaler and teach you the [correct technique](#).



#### Choose a Dry Powder Inhaler (DPI) if you can

- DPIs do not rely on hydrofluorocarbon propellants to spray medication into your lungs; therefore, the carbon footprint is typically equivalent to 1kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per inhaler (a huge reduction!)
- DPIs require less co-ordination to use, as the dose can be prepared before breathing in through the inhaler. They rely on your breath to break up and disperse tiny particles of the medicine through your airways, so it is important you can breathe in hard enough to use them (young children, some elderly patients and those without enough 'puff' may struggle)
- They all come with a dose counter, so you know when to reorder 
- You can find more information on DPIs in the [NICE decision aid](#).
- **Remember:** if you do need an inhaler containing greenhouse gases, please do not feel guilty – everyone has a carbon footprint. 

#### Return used inhalers to the pharmacy for safe disposal or recycling

- Used inhalers can be disposed of by the pharmacy with other drugs waste; this is thermally treated to destroy the greenhouse gases, and much safer than putting them into your household waste. This environmentally safe disposal route is available at all pharmacies and is paid for by NHS England. 
- **Remember:** Do not put your inhaler in kerbside recycling – it will not be recycled.

#### Remember:

A wasted inhaler has the highest carbon footprint of all – please make sure you only order when you need it, and use it as prescribed with a good technique, so you get the highest benefit from each puff.