

## Green Inhalers

For many people with lung disease, inhalers are a lifeline; allowing you to take control of breathing problems and open up your airways. So it can come as a shock to learn that [some inhalers come with a large carbon footprint](#). The most commonly used inhaler in the UK for instance, Ventolin Evohaler™, has a carbon footprint equivalent to 28kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. Many patients are now seeking ways to reduce the greenhouse gas released from their inhalers. For some, switching inhalers could save as much greenhouse gas as becoming vegetarian.



**Equivalent tailpipe greenhouse gas emissions from a Ventolin Evohaler (containing 100 2-puff doses) and a Ventolin Accuhaler (60 1-puff doses). Assumes car achieves 100gCO<sub>2</sub>/km.**

Before making any changes to your treatment you should consult a healthcare professional. Stopping your inhaler because of its carbon footprint is not recommended, not least because if you have an exacerbation the extra treatment you need could greatly increase your carbon footprint!

Below are differences between a metered dose inhaler and a dry powder inhaler

Type of inhaler	Metered Dose Inhaler	Dry Powder Inhaler
What is the climate change impact?	Very large – typically 20kg of CO <sub>2</sub> per inhaler, but it can be more than twice this amount. 20kg of CO <sub>2</sub> is similar to driving about 125 miles in a Ford fiesta	Small – typically equivalent to 1kg of CO <sub>2</sub> per inhaler
Do I need to breath in and press button at the same time?	Usually yes, although some “breath-activated” devices don’t require you to press a button	No, the dose can be prepared before breathing in through the inhaler
What sort of breath in should I do?	Slow and deep breath	Strong deep breath. Some patients may not be able to breathe in hard enough to use these inhalers
Can it be used with a spacer?	Yes nearly all can be used with a spacer	No

Does it have a dose counter?	Many do, but most reliever inhalers and steroid inhalers don't, so you need to keep track of how many doses you've used	All dry powder inhalers either come with a dose counter, or sometimes you put a capsule in each time you use it
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Source: <https://greeninhaler.org/more-environmentally-friendly-inhalers/>

Before making a switch to a more environmentally favourable inhaler, contact your GP or pharmacist to find out if it is right for you. NICE have launched a patient decision aid to help patients (17 years and over) and healthcare professionals explore options for inhaler devices for Asthma (<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk/easysiteweb/getresource.axd?assetid=25734&type=0&servicetype=1> )