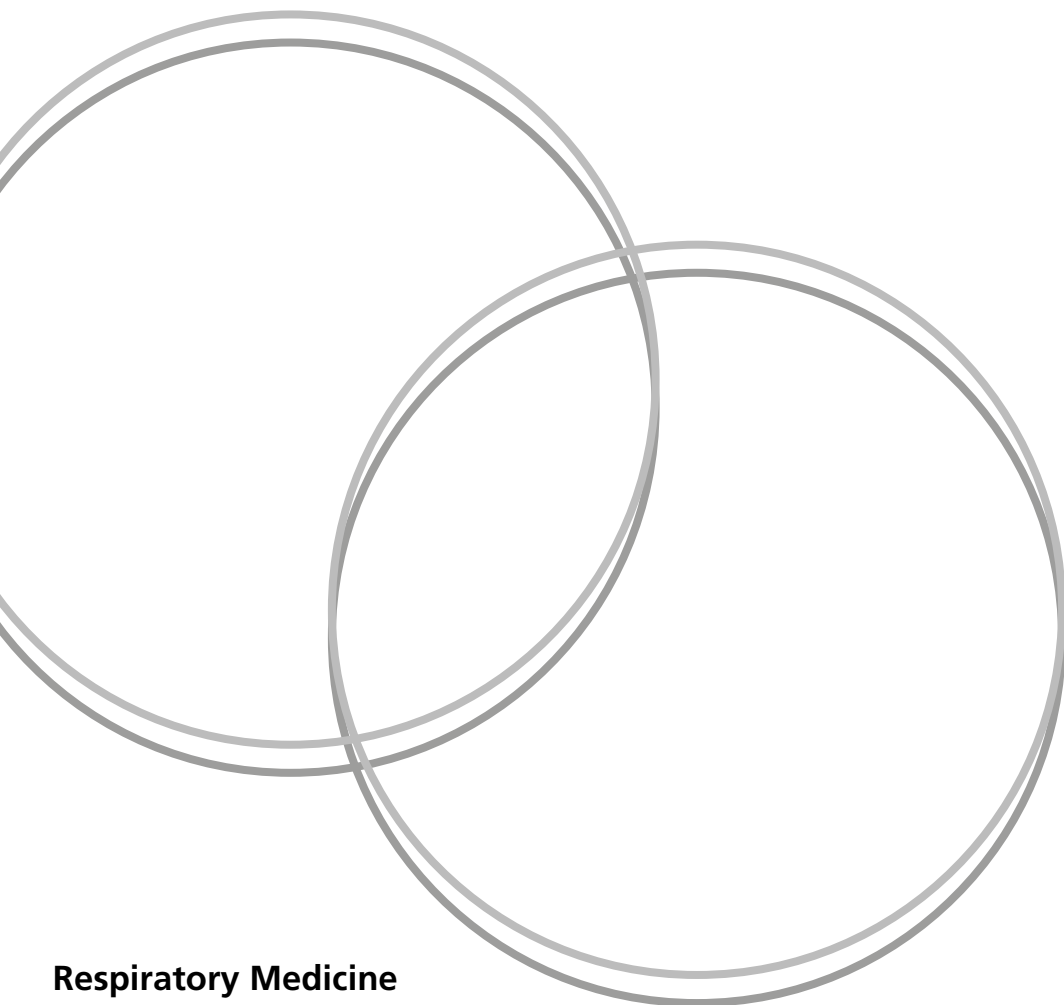




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Nebulised Colomycin[®] Therapy

Information for patients



Respiratory Medicine

What is a nebuliser?

Nebulisers are used to turn medicines into a fine mist, which can be inhaled into the lungs. Colomycin (colistimethate sodium, also sometimes known as colistin) is an antibiotic which can be used to treat long-term respiratory infections, especially those caused by a bacterium called **Pseudomonas aeruginosa**. Nebulising the medication means it can treat the infection in your lungs directly and is much less likely to cause unwanted side effects.

Regular use of this antibiotic can improve lung function, reduce the amount of time you need to spend in hospital to treat infections affecting your lungs and reduce the need for other antibiotics.

It is best to have the treatment twice a day, soon after your physiotherapy or after clearing your chest. This is when your lungs will have been cleared of as much sputum as possible, which creates an environment that the Colomycin can work best in.

You will have an appointment to be shown how to set up the nebuliser and prepare the medicine solution. The nurses will also tell you about the possible side effects.

You will also have your lung function checked before and after the dose, to make sure the Colomycin is not irritating your lungs and causing too much chest tightness. If this happens, you may need to stop using this treatment, but we would choose another treatment option instead.

The information in this leaflet will help remind you how to set up your nebulised Colomycin, so you can have the treatment at home.

Equipment needed

- Colomycin 2 mega-unit vial
- sodium chloride 0.9% (saline) or 'water for injections' in 10ml plastic ampoules
- 5ml syringe (using the plastic vials of liquid (saline or water for injections) means you do not need to use a needle on the syringe)
- nebuliser (including compressor, pot, tubing and mouthpiece)

Instructions

Before you start, please note that Colomycin should be nebulised in a well-ventilated room, without any other people or pets present (where possible).

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap, then dry them with a clean towel.
2. Assemble all the necessary equipment.
3. Check the expiry dates on the Colomycin and liquid ampoules, to make sure they are in date.
4. Gently tap the Colomycin vial on a hard surface, to loosen the powder inside.
5. Flip up the plastic cap on the Colomycin vial.
6. Remove the foil seal by carefully ripping it away from the side of the vial.
7. Remove the coloured bung from the vial.
8. Twist the plastic cap off the 10ml liquid ampoule. Use the 5ml syringe to remove the liquid from the ampoule.
9. Put 4ml of the liquid into the vial of Colomycin.
10. Throw away the rest of the liquid. Put the used syringe and empty liquid ampoule into the yellow 'sharps' bin provided.
11. Replace the bung in the Colomycin vial and swirl or rotate the vial gently between your hands to mix. Avoid shaking the vial, as this can cause excessive frothing. If this happens, leave the vial to stand until the froth has gone.
12. Remove the bung and pour the now liquid medication from the vial into the nebulising pot.
13. Turn on the compressor and use the nebuliser as directed.

Other useful information

Preparing the Colomycin

When the Colomycin powder is mixed with the liquid, it is normal for the mixture to look hazy. It may also be frothy, especially if it has been shaken.

If two doses of Colomycin are prepared, the second dose must be stored in the fridge (between 2-8 °C) and used within 24 hours of preparation.

If the 2 mega-unit vial (with a lilac cap) is out of stock, you may need to use two 1 mega-unit vials (with red caps) instead. If this happens, please call for specific advice using the contact numbers at the end of this leaflet.

Side effects

Sometimes Colomycin can lead to unwanted effects, such as:

- coughing
- bronchospasm (a tight feeling in the chest)
- wheezing
- a sore throat or mouth
- a hoarse voice
- nausea (feeling sick)
- a change to your sense of taste.

Rarely it may also cause a skin rash. If you develop a rash or any of the symptoms above, please contact your GP or hospital team before having any further doses.

The Colomycin will come with a patient information leaflet, which has a full list of possible side effects.

If you experience any other side effects, stop taking the nebulised Colomycin and contact your GP or hospital team.

Further supplies

Although you will start your treatment in hospital, it will be your GP who will be responsible for providing further prescriptions of Colomycin and all the additional supplies, such as saline and syringes. You can take your prescription to any pharmacy.

If you receive glass vials of the liquid, or have any problems with your medication or supplies, please contact your GP.

Cleaning the nebuliser

After using the nebuliser, switch off the machine at the mains supply and wipe the compressor with a warm, damp cloth.

Your nebuliser chamber and the mouthpiece should be cleaned after each use. They can be washed with warm soapy water, rinsed and left to air dry, or put in a dishwasher.

The chamber also needs to be sterilised once a week. Place it in a suitable container with either sterilising tablets or solution (only use the container for this purpose), or boil in a saucepan with two drops of washing-up liquid for 10 minutes.

General advice

Do not mix Colomycin with any other medication that you nebulise in the nebuliser chamber. Some medications may interact with each other if they are mixed, which could stop one of the medicines from working.

How to contact us

If you have any queries, please contact one of the following services:

Oxford Bronchiectasis Team

Tel: **01865 225 713**

(9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

Answerphone available outside of hours.

Oxford COPD/Respiratory Team

Tel: **01865 225 472**

(9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

Answerphone available outside of hours.

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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**Oxford
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