

CORRESPONDENCE

Comparison of nebulizer/compressor combinations

To the Editor:

Such research is very welcome. The authors mention that the National Asthma Campaign has a factsheet for enquirers, which lists some brands of nebulizer/compressors. It is used in addition to a leaflet about spacers and nebulizers (the term that enquirers use), as a response to many requests. These arise from people who have been advised by their doctor that they need a home nebulizer but will have to buy it themselves, or from those who have seen the rapid symptom relief that nebulized bronchodilators can produce and want to have one at home.

It is important to point out that the factsheet starts by stating: "Nebulisers are medical equipment and should only be used if a doctor recommends them." Sometimes a spacer device to use with an inhaler to give higher doses would be more suitable.

The National Asthma campaign does not recommend particular nebulizers. The best person to advise on this is a doctor. If your general practitioner (GP) is uncertain, and you do not attend a chest clinic, your GP can get advice from the chest clinic.

The National Asthma Campaign policy, agreed by senior managers and our chief medical advisor, is that we do not recommend any brands. This is because we

do not have the technical expertise or facilities that would be essential to check every available brand.

It is not possible to list every nebulizer/compressor system on the market due to space and time constraints. The list is limited to major manufacturers, since these are the most likely brands for the patient's doctor to suggest. Others are not "generally regarded as unsuitable" as we have no way of assessing suitability. Details available of any other brands are kept on file, so that an enquirer asking by name for a contact number for one of these can be given it [1].

Any future enquiries from health professionals about brands will be referred to the useful article published in the Journal, in addition to suggesting that they contact their expert colleagues locally.

Reference

1. Smith EC, Denyer J, Kendrick AH. Comparison of three nebulizer/compressor combinations for domiciliary use. *Eur Respir J* 1995; 8: 1214–1221.

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