Instructions to patients using nebulised Colomycin

Who is the leaflet for? What is its aim?
This leaflet is designed to provide a reference for those who have been advised to use nebulised Colomycin. Please retain this information for future reference.

What is Colomycin?
Colomycin is an antibiotic. You are taking it as a nebulised solution straight into your lungs in an attempt to control bacteria found to be growing in your sputum. This may help to reduce the number of chest infections you develop.

Will this affect my other medication?
The nebulised antibiotic is poorly absorbed into the bloodstream and therefore will not affect any other medication taken.

Are there any side effects?
Some people may have a reaction to taking the antibiotic, which is why you will have had an assessment prior to starting the nebulised Colomycin at home. If you develop any side effects whilst taking the drug at home you should inform your GP. If you develop a tight chest, wheeze or difficulty breathing then take your usual ventolin (Salbutamol) and contact your GP urgently. If this does not improve with Salbutamol, go to the accident and emergency department at your local hospital.

How long will I have to take the antibiotic?
If the antibiotic does not cause side effects, your consultant may want to continue it for at least a year and perhaps indefinitely. Further sputum testing may be done to see if the infection is still present. It may not be completely eradicated.

Are there any procedures I need to do prior to treatment?
You should attempt to clear your lungs of sputum prior to taking the nebulised antibiotic. If you have never been shown any techniques or you feel that you are struggling to clear your sputum then please ask your consultant about a referral to a respiratory physiotherapist.
Equipment needed:

- 2.5mg/2.5mls Salbutamol (Alternatively you can use two puffs of your salbutamol inhaler)
- 2mls of sterile saline if mixing with salbutamol. If having after two puffs of your inhaler then please use 4mls
- 1 bottle of 2MU Colomycin

Procedure

1. Use the syringe to draw up 2mls of sterile saline. If you have used your inhaler before the antibiotic then use 4mls of sterile saline
2. Flip up and tear off the top of the 2MU bottle. Removing the red bung, squeeze the 2.5mls Salbutamol into the bottle (if using), and add the saline to this. Replace the bung.
3. Shake the bottle gently until the powder has dissolved, then leave to settle.
4. You can prepare both of the day’s doses in the morning and leave the PM dose in the fridge. Do not prepare more than one days’ worth of doses at a time. Once mixed the drug should not be stored for more than 12 hours.
5. Pour into the nebuliser chamber.
6. To prevent the escape of antibiotics into the surrounding environment, attach the filter housing with the filter pad to the outflow tract of the nebuliser.
7. Attach the nebuliser to the compressor with the tubing, and switch on. Hold the nebuliser unit level and breathe normally in and out through the mouthpiece. This will take approximately 5 to 15 minutes.
8. When the nebuliser has finished, take it apart, dispose of the filter pad, and wash the remaining parts in hot soapy water and rinse. Leave the parts on kitchen paper to dry. Re-assemble the nebuliser immediately prior to your next use.

Is there any special care for this equipment?

The nebuliser chamber should be washed in hot soapy water after each use and allowed to dry before reassembling. If you are using the filters then these should be changed after each use. Alternatively, you may vent the exhaled air outside via tubing. You will be shown how to do this at your initial assessment.

Once at home, you will need to get a repeat prescription from your GP, for the Colomycin and sodium chloride. The nebuliser chamber should be sterilised once a week to help prevent infection. Place all parts in a saucepan with a few drops of washing up liquid, and then boil for ten minutes. The nebuliser chamber should last for a year if it is cleaned as instructed.
Who will monitor my treatment/progress?

The consultant who prescribed this treatment will monitor your progress. Your GP will monitor your general health, report any adverse reactions that may occur and provide further prescriptions of Colomycin, Salbutamol, sodium chloride and syringes etc.

Please dispose of all sharps safely.