Claims

1. A method for cleaning the membrane of a nebulizer device having an aerosol generator comprising a transducer body having a vibrating membrane at its downstream end, the membrane having pores; the method comprising:
   • providing a refillable container for use with the nebulizer device, the container having an opening and being fillable with a cleaning liquid, wherein the opening is sized and shaped to fit onto the transducer body;
   • filling cleaning liquid into the container; and
   • placing the container onto the transducer body so that the container is held in place on the nebulizer device and the membrane is immersed in the liquid inside the container.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the opening of the container is sized and shaped to provide a push-fit on the transducer body of the nebulizer device.

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein the opening is defined by a sealing member.

4. A method according to claim 3 wherein the sealing member is made from an elastomeric material.

5. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the container is made from a recyclable material.

6. A method according to any of claims 1 to 5 wherein the container is sized to contain from 0.1 to 5 mL, of cleaning liquid preferably from 0.2 to 2 mL, more preferably from 0.5 to 1 mL.

7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6 wherein the opening is circular and has a diameter of from 6 to 8mm, such as 7mm.

8. A method according to any of claims 1 to 7 wherein the container has a tab, wherein the tab is shaped to match a complementary indentation in the nebulizer device.

9. A method according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the container forms a seal when held in place on the nebulizer device and has at least one collapsible and/or deformable and/or movable portion for reducing the volume in such a way as to cause

the liquid to pass out of the container through the opening and into the pores of the membrane.

10. A method according to any of claims 1 to 9 wherein the transducer body is cylindrical and the opening of the container is circular and has a diameter which corresponds to the diameter of the transducer body.

11. A method according to claim 10 when dependent on claim 8, wherein the nebulizer device comprises a base unit, a mouthpiece and an aerosol head which are detachably connectible with each other, the base unit comprising one or more indentation(s), the mouthpiece comprising one or more positioning member(s) and a lateral opening, and the aerosol head comprising the aerosol generator; the method comprising:
    • disconnecting the aerosol head from the base unit;
    • removing the mouthpiece;
    • placing the container in the base unit so that the tab is received into the indentation(s); and
    • re-connecting the aerosol head with the base unit, so that the downstream end of the transducer body is inserted into the opening of the container.

12. A method according to any of claims 1 to 11 wherein the membrane is not vibrated while the container is in place on the nebulizer device.

13. A method according to any of claims 1 to 12 wherein the container remains in place on the nebulizer device for at least 5, 10 or 20 hours, and preferably for substantially the whole time between operations.

14. A method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the container is provided as part of a pack comprising a multi-day supply of a drug, one or more cleaning liquids and one or more containers.