

Here's Help: How to Give Your Child Oral Medicine

On a good day, it's hard to get a child to eat their veggies.

On a sick day... how do you get a child to take medicine?

Before you begin, it might help to remind your child why the medicine is needed.

Okay.

Now let's start... with liquid medicines.

If the medicine tastes bad, you could offer your child a flavored ice pop or a cold drink before giving the medicine.

The cold can dull your child's sense of taste.

Try having your child pinch their nose.

It can make the medicine taste less strong.

Have a cup of water or milk nearby to quickly wash away the medicine taste.

Now, swallowing a pill or a tablet may be a challenge, especially if your child has never done it before.

Ask your pharmacist about the forms the medicine can come in.

Maybe your child would have an easier time with a liquid or chewable.

If pills are the only form the medicine comes in... ask about cutting or crushing the pill to make it easier.

You can also find out if the medicine can be mixed with a small amount of food, such as applesauce or pudding.

It's important to ask, because some medicines don't work as well when they're mixed with food.

If it's okay to mix the medicine with food, be sure your child eats all the food.

By the age of 10, your child may be able to swallow a pill.

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Here are some ideas for teaching them how to swallow.

Have your child put the pill far back on their tongue.

Then have them drink through a straw to help wash down the pill.

Sometimes it helps if your child tilts their head back while swallowing.

Your pharmacist may have ideas too.

Most parents and their kids have had power struggles over taking medicines.

The key is to stay calm.

And then make a plan.

Here are some tips.

Give your child some control... by adding in some choices... Stand or sit?

Put the pill on their own tongue?

Or let you do it?

Show your child that you're on the same team.

And offer comfort with a hug or a favorite toy... And praise your child if they take the medicine easily.

And then give yourself a little pat on the back too.

Just like getting your child to eat their veggies, helping them take their medicine may not be easy, but it's for their own good... health.