

Medicating Your Dog

Having to give your dog medication is not a task most pet owners look forward to performing. However, in order for your pet to get well it is important that they receive their medication. This handout includes some tips that will, hopefully, make medicine time a more enjoyable experience for both you and your pet.

The easiest way to medicate your pet is usually going to be to hide the pill in food. Simply, place the pill in a small amount of your pet's food or in a treat, such as cheese, meat, canned food or peanut butter. It is usually best to hide the pill in a small amount of food, rather than in the animal's entire dinner bowl, so that you can closely monitor if your pet actually consumed the medication. Some pets are quite adept at eating around their pill or spitting out their medication.

Some pets are not able to take a pill in a tasty treat due to dietary restrictions. Other pets are simply tricksters maneuvering around the pill and spitting it out. For these pets it may be necessary to manually administer the pill. To give a pill by mouth for your dog, follow these easy steps:

- Gather the correct dose of the medication and place it in a quick and easily accessible location.
- Lubricate the medication with a small amount of butter or margarine. This will allow the pill to slide smoothly down your pet's throat.
- Bring your pet to a safe location where you can comfortably control his movements
- Hold the pill between your thumb and index finger
- From above, grasp the dog's muzzle with the hand not holding the pill. Your grasp should be placed so that your thumb and fingers are on opposite sides of the mouth behind the canine teeth. Be careful not to get your fingers fully in the mouth.
- Using a firm, but gentle grip, tilt your pet's head toward the ceiling. If the mouth does not drop open, use your ring and pinkie fingers of the hand holding the pill to press down on the lower teeth between the canines.
- When the mouth is open, quickly place the pill on the back of the tongue. The pill will be swallowed quickest if it is placed behind the arch of the tongue.
- Close your pet's mouth and hold it closed while lowering the head back to a normal position.
- If your pet does not automatically swallow the pill, then gently rub the underside of its throat, and lightly blow on or rub its nose. These actions will stimulate a swallow reflex in your pet.
- Closely observe your pet after performing this procedure to make sure that the pill is not regurgitated or spit out.
- Remember, throughout the entire procedure to offer praise and encouragement. And when the pill is swallowed, lavish your pet with praise and a tasty food reward.