

How to Give Medication to Your Child

There are many ways to give your child medicine. Depending on the illness, each medicine will be a little different. It is important for parents to know the different ways of giving medicine to your child. Knowing will save you time spent in the doctor's office or standing in line at the pharmacy.

How do I make sure my child takes the right amount of medicine?

- Always follow the directions on the medicine or the directions from your doctor or pharmacist.
- Double-check your child's dose before you give them any medicine.
- Don't confuse milligrams (mg) and milliliters (mL). They are not the same. Milliliters measure the volume of liquids; milligrams measure weight. When you pick up liquid medicine, ask the pharmacist to show you the amount to give your child on the syringe, cup or dropper.
- If you are not sure how much medicine to give your child, call your child's healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Know Your Medication Abbreviations

- tbsp: Tablespoon
- tsp: Teaspoon
- oz: Ounce
- ml: Milliliter
- mg: Milligram

If the prescribed dose is in a different unit than your measuring syringe, cup, or spoon, do not try to convert it and don't use a regular spoon because that's not the same as a measuring spoon.

Using medications safely means knowing when they're necessary—and when they're not. Always check with the doctor if you're unsure whether symptoms require treatment with medication.

How do I give medication safely?

Medicine droppers

Droppers are mostly used for babies, because babies cannot chew or swallow capsules. Usually, the medicine dropper comes with the bottle of liquid medicine. Droppers have a measuring line on them.



Make sure your baby's dose is the same as is measured on the medicine dropper. If you have any questions, contact your child's healthcare provider or pharmacist.

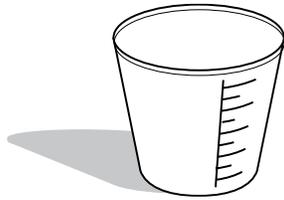
Do not give your baby medicine when they are lying down. Do not squirt it in the back of their throat because they can choke.

To give your baby medicine through a dropper:

- Unscrew the dropper and take it out of the medicine bottle.
- Squeeze the rubber top, put the dropper in the medicine, and begin sucking the medicine up to the right measuring line. Then let go of the rubber top.
- Hold your baby in your lap, raise their head slightly, and rest their head against your body.
- Open your baby's mouth and squirt the medicine into the cheek pocket. It may help to squeeze your baby's cheeks slightly until they swallow the medicine.

Medicine cup

A medicine cup is a small, plastic cup with measuring marks on the side. Use a medicine cup for your toddler or child if they normally drink from a cup.



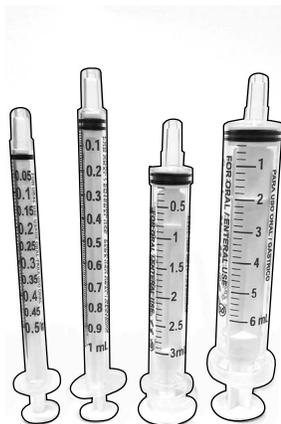
To give your child medicine in a medicine cup:

- Pour liquid medicine into the medicine cup. Make sure you've poured the right amount.
- Give your child the medicine slowly. Allow them to swallow between sips.
- Rinse the medicine cup with warm water when you are finished.

Syringe

You can use a plastic oral syringe with no needle to give liquid medicines to babies and toddlers.

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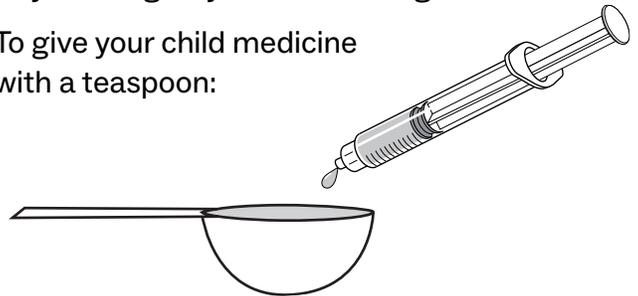
To give your child medicine with a syringe:

- Clean the syringe by pulling on the plunger to fill it with warm water. Then push the water out. Rinse and empty the syringe several times, but do not take the syringe apart
- After the syringe is clean, push the plunger all the way down. Put the syringe tip in the medicine or into the stopper in the bottle. Then pull the plunger until the medicine is at the right level.
- Hold your child in your lap, raise their head slightly, and rest their head against your body.
- Put the syringe to the side and the back of your child's mouth. Slowly push down the plunger on the syringe, giving your child time to swallow.
- Rinse the syringe with warm water when you are finished.

Teaspoon

If your child's healthcare provider asks you to give your child a teaspoon of medicine, do not use an ordinary spoon. Use a measuring spoon so you can give your child the right dose.

To give your child medicine with a teaspoon:



- Pour the medicine into the teaspoon. Do not overfill it.
- Put the teaspoon in your child's mouth and let them swallow it slowly.
- Rinse the teaspoon with warm water when you are finished.

If the directions on the medicine say to use a teaspoon or tablespoon, ask your pharmacist how much to give your child.

Pills and capsules

Do not give your baby or toddler pills.

Make sure your child is old enough to know how to swallow pills before using them.

To give older children pills:

- Have your child drink some water before swallowing a pill, unless the directions say not to.
- Have your child swallow a pill and then drink more water.
- Put the lid back on the medicine bottle tightly and store it out of your child's reach.

