

Giving Your Pet Medication

for dogs & cats

Getting medicine into a dog or cat can be the hardest part of treatment — and skipped doses mean the medicine can't work. Here are the tricks that make **pills, liquids, and compounded forms** go down easier, and when to ask us to change the form entirely. Always follow your veterinarian's directions and the prescription label first.

Start with the easy wins — hide it in food

- **Pill pockets & soft treats.** Give one empty treat first, then the loaded one, then a plain "chaser."
- **Strong-flavored foods.** A small ball of cheese, peanut butter (xylitol-free), or plain deli meat — small enough that the whole dose gets eaten.
- **Feed before the meal.** Hide the pill when your pet is hungriest — right before mealtime, not after.
- **Watch them take it.** Cats especially will eat around a pill. Confirm it's swallowed before walking away.

Never use: xylitol-sweetened peanut butter (toxic to dogs), onions, grapes/raisins, or chocolate. And **don't crush a pill** into food without asking us first — some medications taste terrible (your pet will refuse the food) and some must not be crushed.

Giving a pill directly

When hiding fails:

1. **Stay calm** and have everything ready. For cats and wiggly small dogs, gently wrap the body in a towel ("burrito") with only the head out.
2. **Hold the head from above**, tilting the nose gently upward — the jaw relaxes naturally.
3. **Open the lower jaw** with your other hand and place the pill as **far back on the tongue's center** as you can.
4. **Close the mouth**, keep the nose slightly up, and gently stroke the throat until you see a swallow.
5. **Follow right away with a treat or a little water** — it rewards them and washes the pill down.

Liquid medication by syringe

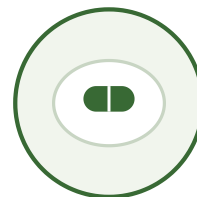
1. **Draw up the exact dose** and check it against the label.
2. **Slide the syringe tip into the side of the mouth**, into the cheek pouch behind the fangs — not straight at the throat.
3. **Give it slowly, in small squirts**, letting your pet swallow between them. Squirting fast at the back of the mouth can cause choking or aspiration.
4. **Keep the head level** or only slightly raised — never tilt it far back for liquids.
5. **Rinse the syringe** with warm water after each use.

Still fighting? Ask us to change the form

This is exactly what compounding is for. If doses are being missed, tell your vet and call us — we can often prepare the same medication as:

- **Flavored liquid** — chicken, beef, fish, or liver flavoring your pet actually wants.
- **Soft chew "treat"** — the dose built into a chewable treat.
- **Smaller capsule** — combining medications or right-sizing a dose for small pets.
- **Transdermal gel** — some medications absorb through the ear skin, no mouth involved. See our Topi-Click Ear Gel for Pets guide.

Finish the course. Give the medication for as long as prescribed — even if your pet seems better — and never give human medications or another pet's prescription.



pill tucked inside a soft treat

This guide is general educational information, **not veterinary medical advice**, and does not replace your pet's prescription label or your veterinarian's or pharmacist's guidance, which always take priority. Use only the medication prescribed for your pet, at the prescribed dose. If your pet struggles, chokes, vomits doses, or has a reaction that concerns you, stop and **contact your veterinarian**; after hours, contact an emergency veterinary clinic. By using this information you accept that Village Pharmacy & Compounding, its owners, and staff are not liable for any injury, loss, or damage arising from its use.

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