

Helping Your Child Take Their IBD Medicine

How to Talk to Your Child About Taking Medicine

- Call the medicine what it is and explain what it will do.
- Prepare the child in advance for the need to take the medicine.
- Keep a positive attitude when giving medicine.
- If it is a young child, offer praise and hug your child once he/she has taken the medicine.

Here are some ways to offer your child choices about taking medicine

- Make medicine time part of the daily schedule and routine. This helps your child get ready and feel prepared to take the medicine. If the child is a pre-schooler or young school-aged child, make a reward or sticker chart to help keep track of progress.
- If the child is 3 years old or older, involve the child in getting the medicine ready and taking it. You can help them. Avoid leaving children alone to take their medicine.

How to make medicines easier to take

Before trying any of the ideas regarding crushing or mixing the medication with food, check with the child's pharmacist to make sure the pills can be crushed or mixed.

- Ask the pharmacist about flavoring options to help make liquid medicine taste better, in particular prednisone and metronidazole.
- Try using a syringe without a needle on it if giving liquid medicine.
- Have the child eat something cold such as ice chips or a popsicle before taking the medicine.
- Mix the liquid medicine with a strong flavor. This could be a powdered drink mix, chocolate syrup, maple syrup, cherry syrup, or other flavored syrups.
- Crushed pills can also be mixed with foods like applesauce, yogurt, sherbet, pudding or ice cream.
- If the child is able to swallow a pill, but the medicine tastes bad, try putting the pill inside a gel capsule which can be purchased for a nominal fee at the pharmacy.
- Have the child quickly drink something after taking the medicine. Sucking on a lollipop may also help.

How to teach children to swallow pills

- See crohnscolitisfoundation.org: I have to swallow that? Pill Swallowing Techniques for Kids and Teens
- Cut the pill into halves or quarters. Give the child one piece at a time to swallow. Again, check with the pharmacist to make sure the pills can be cut.
- If using a gel capsule, dip the capsule in ice water to make the coating slippery and easier to swallow.

- It may help to put the pills in a small piece of fruit snack.

References

- Crohn's & Colitis Foundation: www.crohnscolitisfoundation.org
- Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle, Washington, 2009, seattlechildrens.org/pdf/pe398.pdf