

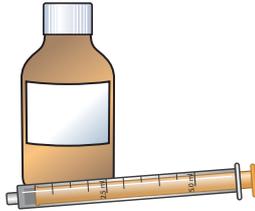


How to give medicines: liquid medicine

This leaflet gives tips about how to give liquid medicine to children. Leaflets on individual medicines are available on the Medicines for Children website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk



This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of medicines in children. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.



! Some liquid medicines should be taken with food or milk. Other liquid medicines work best on an empty stomach. There are a few liquid medicines that **should not** be taken with certain foods, juices or milk. This should be shown on the medicine label. If you are not sure which food and drink your child should have with the medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist. Detailed information about what to do is given in the leaflet for each medicine on the Medicines for Children website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

Liquid medicine

- Wash your hands with soap and water before giving liquid medicine.
- Shake the bottle well.
- Measure out the right amount using an oral syringe (see instructions below) or medicine spoon. You can get these from your pharmacist.
- **Do not** use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.
- Make sure your child takes it all straight away.
- To hide the taste of liquid medicine, you can give the child a drink of milk or fruit juice straight after giving the medicine.

If your child will not or cannot take the medicine on its own, even with a drink straight afterwards, speak with your doctor or pharmacist. They may advise that to hide the taste of the liquid medicine by mixing it with milk or fruit juice; but always check as this process is not suitable for all medicines

- Add the dose of liquid medicine to a glass of milk or fruit juice (preferably at room temperature).
- Make sure your child drinks all the mixture straight away.
- Then add some more juice or milk to the glass, swirl it round and ask your child to drink the liquid. This makes sure they get all the medicine.

! Check the leaflet for the medicine you are giving, or speak with your doctor or pharmacist before mixing the medicine into a drink to give it.

Other important information

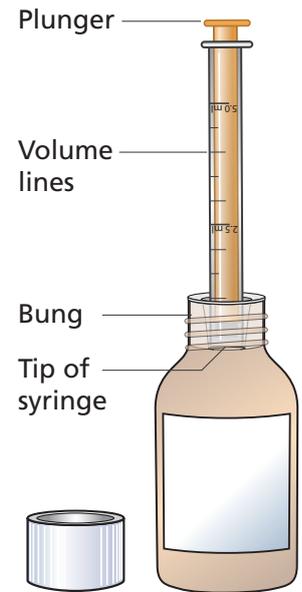
! When you get a new prescription of liquid medicine, check what strength medicine you have and how much to give your child, as it may be different from the previous batch.

- Some liquid medicines must be kept in the fridge. Make sure you follow the instructions on the bottle. If you are unsure, speak with your pharmacist.
- Some liquid medicines do not keep for long once they have been opened. Write the date that you start it on the bottle and make sure you follow the instructions on the bottle.

Using an oral syringe

Your pharmacist may give you an oral syringe to measure and give liquid medicine to your child. This will help make sure that your child gets the right amount.

Some bottles of medicine have a rubber bung, which is pushed into the neck of the bottle. You can purchase bungs from some pharmacists.



Preparing the syringe (with a bung)

- Shake the bottle well, making sure the cap is firmly on the bottle.
- Remove the cap and if the rubber bung has not already been inserted, push it fully into the neck of the bottle.
- Take the syringe and pull the plunger back so that the top of the black ring is on the volume for the dose you need to give.



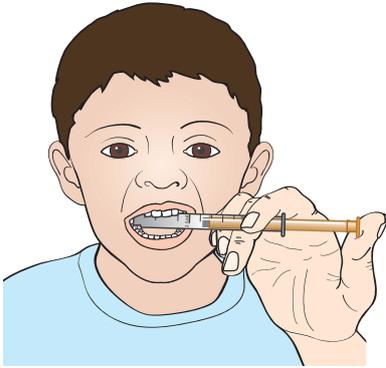
- Push the tip of the syringe into the hole in the middle of the rubber bung.
- Turn the whole bottle with the syringe upside down.
- Slowly push the plunger into the syringe. This will push air into the bottle.
- Then pull the plunger slowly back to the volume you need for your child's dose.
- Turn the whole bottle with the syringe the right way up and take the syringe out of the bottle.

Preparing the syringe (without a bung)

- Shake the bottle well, making sure the cap is firmly on the bottle.
- Remove the cap.
- Place the bottle the right way up on a flat surface.
- Put the tip of the syringe into the opening of the bottle and make sure it is in the liquid.
- Pull the plunger back until you have drawn the right amount of liquid into the syringe.
- You may need to tilt the bottle so the tip of the syringe stays in the liquid and you do not draw air up into the syringe. Sometimes it is easier to get the syringe into the liquid if you pour a small amount of the liquid into a clean pot before taking it up into the syringe. Be careful not to spill the medicine.

Giving the medicine

- Make sure that your child is sitting up or standing.
- Put the syringe into your child's mouth, with the tip near the inside of their cheek.



- Push the plunger in slowly, giving your child time to swallow the medicine as it squirts out. Do not push the plunger too quickly as the medicine may come out too quickly and your child may choke.

After giving the medicine

- Wash the syringe straight away using fresh, soapy water. Draw the plunger in and out in the soapy water several times. Then rinse the syringe in clean water in the same way.
- If the medicine bottle has a rubber bung you can usually keep it in the bottle all the time. Wipe the top of the bung with a damp paper towel after each dose and put the cap over it between doses. Some bungs need to be removed from the bottle, and washed before and after each use. Your pharmacist will advise you about this.

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk



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The primary source for the information in this leaflet is the British National Formulary for Children. For details on any other sources used for this leaflet, please contact us through our website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

We take great care to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct and up-to-date. However, medicines can be used in different ways for different patients. It is important that you ask the advice of your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about something. This leaflet is about the use of these medicines in the UK, and may not apply to other countries. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), the Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacists Group (NPPG), WellChild and the contributors and editors cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of information, omissions of information, or any actions that may be taken as a consequence of reading this leaflet.