



## How to give medicines: capsules

This leaflet gives advice on how to give capsules to children. Leaflets on individual medicines are available on the Medicines for Children website, [www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)

This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to give medicines to children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adults. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

### Capsules (general)

- Capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water, milk or juice.
- Some capsules should be taken with food or milk. Other capsules work best on an empty stomach.



There are a few capsules 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 Medicines for Children leaflet for each individual medicine.

- Your child should **not** chew the capsule.

### Mixing with food

The contents of some capsules can be mixed with a small amount of food. If you are not sure if your child's capsules can be mixed with food, speak with your child's doctor or pharmacist.

- Open the capsule and mix the contents with a teaspoon of soft food (e.g. yogurt, mashed potato or jam).
- Make sure your child swallows it straight away, without chewing.
- The capsule contents may have a bitter taste, so you may need to use something strong-tasting to mask it.

### Dissolving in water

The contents of some capsules can be dissolved in water or juice. If you are not sure if your child's capsules can be mixed with water or juice, speak with your child's doctor or pharmacist.

- Open the capsule and dissolve the contents in a small glass of water or fruit juice.
- Make sure your child drinks it straight away.
- Then add some more water or juice to the glass, swirl it round and ask your child to drink it. This makes sure they get all the medicine.

### Giving part of a capsule.

- Very rarely, the only way to provide the correct dose of medicine for your child will be to disperse the contents of a capsule in a small amount of water and give some of the mixture.
- Your doctor or pharmacist will let you know if this is necessary and explain what to do. This method should only be used when there is no other option and you have been told to do it.
- Any unused mixture should be poured into a paper towel and put in the bin. Do not pour it down the sink

### Sprinkle capsules

'Sprinkle capsules' can be sprinkled in food. This information will be shown on the medicine label.

- Open the capsule and sprinkle the granules into a teaspoonful of soft food (e.g. yogurt, mashed potato or jam).
- Make sure your child swallows it all straight away, without chewing.
- These capsules can also be swallowed whole with a glass of water, juice or milk.

[www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)