This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to give tablets 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.

General information about tablets

- Medicines are often available as a tablet that you give to your child by mouth (orally).
- Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should generally not chew the tablet unless they say “chewable”.
- Some tablets should be taken with food or milk. Other tablets work best on an empty stomach.

There are a few tablets 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 or drink your child should have with the medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

- Detailed information about how to give different tablets is provided on www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

Giving part of a tablet

- Very rarely, the only way to provide the correct dose of medicine for your child will be to give part of a tablet or to disperse a tablet 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.

Crushing tablets

Some tablets can be crushed and mixed with a small amount of food. If you are not sure if the tablets can be crushed, speak with your doctor or pharmacist. You may crush the tablet only if your child is unable to swallow it whole.

- Crush the tablet and mix it with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, mashed potato or jam.
- Make sure your child swallows it all straight away, without chewing.

Enteric-coated tablets

- Do not crush enteric-coated tablets. These have a coating to protect the stomach.
- This information will be shown on the medicine label.

Dissolving and dispersing tablets

Some tablets can be dissolved or dispersed in a glass of water. If you are not sure if the tablets can be dissolved, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

- Dissolve or disperse the tablet in a small glass of water
- You can add some fruit juice or squash to hide the taste.
- Make sure your child drinks it straight away.
- Add some more water, juice or squash to the glass, swirl it round and ask your child to drink it. This makes sure they get all the medicine.

Orodispersible tablets

Orodispersible tablets are designed to dissolve on the tongue.

- Make sure your hands are dry.
- Take the tablet out of the blister pack and put it on your child’s tongue straight away. The tablet will dissolve quickly.
- If you prefer, you can dissolve the orodispersible tablet in a glass of water. You can add juice or squash to hide the taste. Your child should drink it all straight away.
- Add some more water, juice or squash to the glass, swirl it round and ask your child to drink it. This makes sure they get all the medicine.

Effervescent tablets

Effervescent tablets need to be dissolved in a glass of water.

- Dissolve the tablet in a glass of water. You can add juice or squash to hide the taste.
- Make sure your child drinks all the mixture, either straight away or over a period of about 30 minutes.
- Add some more water, juice or squash to the glass, swirl it round and ask your child to drink it. This makes sure they get all the medicine.

Chewtabs

‘Chewtabs’ can be chewed. It should say this on the label.

- Make sure your child chews all of the medicine.
- Ideally your child should drink a glass of water, milk or juice after swallowing the chewtab.