



GIVING YOUR CHILD MEDICINE

You will probably be giving your child with **cystic fibrosis*** (CF*) medicine every day. How you give the medicine depends on the type of medicine and the age of your child. Here are some hints to help you.

THE "5 RIGHTS" FOR GIVING MEDICINE

Make sure you know the right way to give medicine to your child. One way to double-check is to go over the *5 Rights*:

1. **Right medicine?** Is it the drug that the doctor prescribed?
2. **Right form?** Is it a liquid, pill, or a capsule?
3. **Right amount?** How much should your child take?
4. **Right route?** Is this a medicine to swallow or breathe in?
5. **Right time?** Is this the time your child should take it?

WHAT TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST

Do I give the medicine with or without food? If your child is supposed to swallow the medicine, find out if it should be given with food or on an empty stomach. With some medicines it does not matter. Be sure to check with your doctor or **pharmacist*** to find out what foods are okay to mix with a given medicine.

Will the medicine interact with any other medicines my child is taking? The pharmacist or doctor can tell you if certain medicines do not mix well or could interact with each other.

What if my child spits out the medicine? Ask the doctor ahead of time what to do if your child spits out or throws up the medicine.

What about side effects? Know what **side effects*** to watch for if you are giving your child a new medicine.

FORMS OF MEDICINES

Liquid Medicines

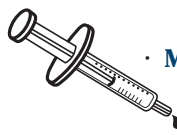
Babies and toddlers usually need liquid medicine.

Measure liquid medicine with a:



- Kitchen measuring spoon

- Special medicine spoon



- **Medicine syringe***

You can get the medicine spoon and syringe at a drugstore. You should not use the kind of teaspoon you eat with because teaspoons for eating can vary in size and may not be an accurate measure.

The medicine syringe does NOT have a needle, but is actually a tube with markings on the side to measure medicine. The tube with a plunger allows you to squirt the medicine into your child's mouth. To use a medicine syringe, squirt the medicine inside the cheek. If you squirt it directly into the back of the throat, it could make your child choke. A baby may suck on the syringe like a nipple.

You can also try putting a small amount of medicine into a nipple and hold the nipple while your baby sucks the medicine.

Do not add medicine to a full bottle because your baby might not drink all of it and he or she will not get the full dose of medicine.

Sprinkle Medicines

Some medicines (such as **pancreatic enzymes***) come as beads in capsules or packets that can be opened and sprinkled on food. Be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist to find out what food is okay to use with a medicine.

Pills or Capsules

By six or seven years old, most children can learn to swallow pills and capsules. See the module *Working with Your Child* to find ways to help your child learn to swallow pills.

TAKING MEDICINE TO DAY CARE OR SCHOOL

In many states it is against the law for day-care or school staff to give your child medicine unless the medicine is in a labeled bottle from the pharmacy. Ask the pharmacist to split the prescription into two labeled bottles: one for home, one for day care. That way you will not wind up at home on the weekend with your child's **antibiotic*** locked up in a day-care or school refrigerator!

NOTE TO PARENTS:

If you have questions about any medicine, ask your CF health care team for information.

Let your CF health care team know if you think your child is having side effects from a medicine, or if you are having trouble giving your child the medicine.



*See CF Words to Know Glossary.