



Tips for Giving Medication to Your Cat

One of the biggest dilemmas facing owners of felines with long-term health conditions is the ability to consistently administer medications safely and without stress. If your cat won't take his or her pills, don't despair! There are many techniques and tricks to try to make medication time a painless and perhaps enjoyable experience. Try different methods to find what works best for you and your cat.

1. **Don't be nervous!** An owner's stress about medicating can increase a cat's stress related to administering meds. If your cat hides or seems anxious around pilling time, a Feliway diffuser may help. This product plugs into an outlet like an air freshener and releases pheromones to calm your cat. You can buy one from your veterinarian or most local pet stores.
2. **Make medication time a routine.** Use a special phrase when it's med time. Have a designated location where ONLY pilling happens. Try a closed small room with good lighting like a bathroom or laundry room. Put the cat on a soft, non-skid surface like a bath mat, rug, towel, pillow, or blanket. Depending on which is easiest, sit on the floor with your cat or set him or her on a counter or washer/dryer. Comfort for the both of you is the key!
3. **If you're trying to pill your cat...** try coating the tablet lightly with butter or margarine. This masks the taste of the medication and may make your cat more compliant. Similarly, you can obtain flavored gel caps and put the whole or crushed pill inside. A pilling gun can help deliver the tablet to the back of a cat's mouth without putting your hand inside (be careful not to insert the gun too far back in the cat's throat). Stroking the throat or giving some water in a syringe may aid in helping the cat to swallow. Pill crushers and splitters are available at pharmacies and veterinary supply companies to make pills easier to administer.
4. **Mix the medication in food.** Tablets can be crushed, and most capsules can be opened to mix medications in wet cat food or a special treat. Be cautious; some cats may develop a food aversion to their regular food when drugs are mixed in.



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If your cat is on a prescription diet, try to test drugs with some other kind of food first before using in the prescription diet. You can try tuna fish, baby food (make sure it contains no onion or garlic powder as these are toxic to your cat), or other moist, yummy treats. Again, if your pet is on a prescription or restricted diet, make sure these supplemental treats are okay by your veterinarian.

5. **Try the Sticky Paw Trick.** Crush the pill and mix with butter, honey, or laxatone. Spread the mixture on one or both paws so your cat licks it off.
6. **Administer with a syringe.** Mix crushed medication with gravy or soupy wet cat food and administer with an oral syringe. Some brands that work well are Friskies Buffet Poultry, Wiskas Mealtime Kitty Stew, or any brand with lots of gravy.
7. **Other treats to hide pills in:**
 - a. Pill Pockets (www.pillpockets.com/main.htm)
 - b. Flavor-doh (www.flavordoh.com)
 - c. Soft cat treats like Friskies TENDER Poultry or Salmon.
 - d. Treats that are crunchy outside and soft inside like Whiskas Snacks. Cut the treat in half and hide the pill in the soft part, then press closed.
 - e. Cheez Whiz
8. **Use a compounded medication.** Ask your veterinarian if it is an option to put your medication in another format. They may use a compounding pharmacy to make a flavored liquid or chewable medication. Price depends on the individual pharmacy and type of medication.
9. **Give the medication as an injection.** If oral medications are not working and you are not averse to giving injections, ask your veterinarian if there is an injectable version of your cat's medication.
10. ***Most of all, do not hesitate to call us for help or if you have any questions!***



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