



How to Pill Your Cat

We understand that giving your cat a pill can be a difficult process. There are several strategies to try. The goal is to make medicating your cat as low stress on your pet (and you!) as possible.

Pilling by hand

Many cats will tolerate this well. You can either give the pill as is, or you can also try lubricating it with a little butter, margarine, or cream. If your cat is fairly docile, then you may be able to administer the pill by yourself with no help. There are four ways to hold your cat by yourself to give the pill.

- The first method involves holding the top of your cat's head by placing your thumb on one side of the upper jaw and your fingers on the other side. Tilt your cat's head back gently until their nose points toward the ceiling, which should cause your cat's jaw to open slightly.
- The second method involves scruffing your cat firmly and tipping their head back until the nose points toward the ceiling. This is for slightly less cooperative cats.
- The third method involves putting your hand under your cat's chin with your thumb in one cheek, and your fingers in the other, and pushing in gently until your cat opens their mouth.
- The fourth method is only for cats that like to be held on their back. This involves cradling them on their back like a baby, but with their head and neck in an upright position, and just using your hand to open up their mouth.

Once you have found a method of restraint that works for your cat, the next step is to use your ring finger and little finger to open your cat's mouth further, and then using your thumb and forefinger to place the pill as far back in your cat's mouth as possible. Quickly close your cat's mouth, and hold it closed. You can encourage swallowing by one of three methods; gently rubbing your cat's throat, blowing in your cat's nose, or have a syringe of water ready to go, and dribbling it into the side of your cat's mouth immediately after placing the pill.

Hiding the pill in food

For this, you can use any cat food or people food as long as it is not a food that will make them sick. The only people foods you need to avoid is anything with garlic, onions or chocolate in them since those are toxic to cats. Anything else in a small amount is okay to use. ***If your cat is on a special diet, please talk to your veterinarian before trying different foods*.**

Probably the easiest way to hide a pill in a treat is to purchase a "Pill Pocket" or something similar. This is a soft treat with a hole in the center. You place the pill inside the treat, smush it closed over the pill, and pretend that you are just giving a normal treat to your cat. If your cat is a big treat eater, and they don't tend to chew their treats, this will work very well. You can also try this using a piece of cheese, lunch meat, hamburger, cream cheese, peanut butter, liverwurst or anything that is small that you can hide a pill inside of and that your cat will be likely to inhale without chewing.