



How To Pill Your Dog

Hide it in food

There are many different foods that you can try. Stay away from foods that are spicy or high in fat. *If your dog is on a special diet or has a chronic medical illness, please check with your veterinarian before trying the foods listed below.*

- Pill Pocket
- Peanut Butter
- Cream cheese, cottage cheese, cheese whiz
- Liverwurst
- Any lean meat such as turkey, chicken or ham
- Sardine paste
- Meat flavored baby food
- Meatballs made of canned dog food
- Marshmallows (this is a great option for dogs on a hypoallergenic diet)
- Mashed Potato
- Hot Dog
- Sausage
- Yogurt
- Cool whip
- Sour cream
- You can coat the pill in peanut butter or cream cheese and then wrap it in a piece of sliced meat.
- You can coat the pill in butter, honey or yogurt to help it slide down the throat.
- If this doesn't work for your dog, then the next thing is to grind the pill up into a fine powder using either a mortar and pestle, two spoons, a hammer, a pill grinder, or anything that will achieve the desired result. You can then mix the pill powder in a small amount of a very tasty dog or human food that your dog normally goes crazy over. Just make sure that your dog eats all of the food, or they won't get all of their medicine, so don't use a large amount of food.
- You can also crush the pill and mix it with a small amount of liquid such as tuna juice or liquid dog food and give it with a syringe. You can purchase a syringe from your local drug store or we can provide you with one free of charge.



Not all pills can be cut or crushed, please check with us before using this method

Play the treat catch game

- Make 5 or 6 fingertip-sized balls of soft, tasty, smelly food. Toss them to your dog, one at a time, so he catches them and swallows them. Oops, did Smelly Food Ball #3 just happen to have his medication in it? Fancy that.
- Really sneaky pill-givers will play the treat-catch game at random times regardless of whether your dog actually has any medication to take. This way, treat-catching has no particular significance – it's just a fun thing that happens occasionally – so your dog is more likely to suspect nothing when you use the game to deliver meds. And if he's got the habit of gulping down the treats you throw, he's also less likely to notice if one of them tastes a little funny.

Pilling by hand

- It's best to use the tricks above to avoid causing your dog unnecessary stress. However, if those procedures fail, you'll need to open your dog's mouth and insert the pill directly. Before you start, get a tasty treat and keep it within reach.
- Hold the pill in the fingers of one hand. Place that hand on your dog's lower jaw and the other hand on his upper jaw. Lift his head up toward the ceiling.
- Open your dog's mouth and twist your hand around so you can insert the pill. Place the pill to the side of your dog's tongue as far back as you can reach, and then quickly withdraw your hand as you close your dog's jaws. (The action is similar to feeding a baby bird small wads of moistened bread.)
- Continue to hold your dog's jaws closed with one hand while keeping his nose pointed up at the ceiling, and gently stroke his throat downward with the other to encourage him to swallow.
- As soon as you think your dog has swallowed the pill, offer him the tasty treat so that he takes it and swallows again when he takes the treat.
- Right after pilling your dog, keep an eye on him for a minute or two. Some dogs learn to hold the pill in their mouth and then spit it out when you're not paying attention.

Using a pill popper

So neither treats nor hand pilling will work for your dog. Don't give up yet. This is what they invented pill poppers for. Pill poppers look like a long fat syringe designed to hold a pill in the end. You can then use the pill popper to get the pill into the back of your dog's throat without having to risk getting bitten. Once you have control of your dog's head, take the pill popper with the pill already placed in it and use it to open your dog's mouth by pushing it into the side of your dog's mouth just behind the big teeth where there is an area with no teeth. Once in, quickly but gently push the pill popper to the back of your dog's mouth, push the pill in, and then repeat the methods to stimulate swallowing.



***You can purchase a pill popper from us, your regular veterinarian or from a pet store.**