



Tablet HIV Medicines

Antiretroviral pills tend to be very large. Some tablets can be cut in half or crushed for those who cannot swallow such large pills. Other types of tablet medicines will lose their effectiveness if cut or changed in any way.

If your child has difficulty swallowing pills, speak to his or her doctor or pharmacist for directions to help him or her take the medication.

Suggestions for Giving Medications

Babies and Toddlers

This method works well with children small enough to be held.

- Hold your child in your arms, with your child's right arm under your left arm and around your back.
- Firmly hold his or her head tilted back between your right arm and chest.
- When you have given all of the medication, hold and comfort your child. Offer a pacifier, bottle or cup.

Giving medication to babies and toddlers can be frustrating. It is important not to yell or show anger. If you are having trouble giving medications, ask your child's nurse to demonstrate the procedure for you in the clinic.

Older Children

Never ask your child whether he or she wants to take the medication. Taking medication is not optional. Firmly tell your child it is time for medicine. Offer a choice of liquid or food to take after the medication.

Do not threaten or punish your child. Be patient. Keep explanations simple. Tell your child that the medications will help him or her feel better and be able to play. Some children will cooperate better if you offer rewards, such as stickers.

If you cannot get your child to take his or her medications, call the clinic and ask to speak to the nurse.

Vomiting and Missed Doses

If your child vomits the medication within 20 minutes after giving the dose, repeat the dose. If your child vomits more than 20 minutes after giving the dose, we do not know how much of the dose has been absorbed, so do not repeat the dose.

If your child continues to vomit or vomits after every dose of medicine, contact your child's care team.

If your child misses a dose of medication, give it as soon as possible and then continue with the regular schedule. Do not re-time medicines after a missed dose.

If it is more than 12 hours from the usual dosing time, wait and give that dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not double up and give two doses of the same medication at the same time. This could increase possible side effects.