

## How to Give Liquid Medications to Dogs

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### Q. How do I give liquid medications to my dog?

A. If your dog is not on dietary restrictions, your veterinarian said that the medication can be given with food, and the dose is small, the easiest way may be to mix it with a small amount of canned food. It is best to give a small amount of the food without the medication first. This lowers your dog's suspicion index. It is best not to mix the medication in an entire meal, since if the dog does not eat the whole meal, she will not get the appropriate dose of medication.

If your dog will not take the medication in food, cannot have food with the medication, or the dose is too large, then it is down the hatch.

1. Get the medication ready - shake the bottle if necessary, and withdraw the appropriate amount of liquid into the dropper or oral syringe provided by your veterinarian. Place the filled dropper or syringe where it will be handy.
2. Call your dog to you in a happy voice. If you do not sound worried or concerned, your dog will be less likely to feel that way as well.
3. Take your dog to a convenient spot, and place your dog's hind end against something so he cannot back away from you. Some people have found they have better control if they place the dog on a surface up above the floor. If you do so, make sure you have assistance, so the dog will not jump or fall off the table and hurt himself. The person assisting you should hold the dog around the shoulders and chest.
4. Pick up the syringe or dropper. (If you are right-handed, use your right hand.)
5. Using your other hand, gently grasp your dog's muzzle from above. Tilt the dog's head back slightly.
6. Place the tip of the eyedropper or syringe into the pocket formed between the dog's cheek and back teeth.
7. Slowly administer the medication. Give the medication in small amounts with a slight pause between each portion. Be very careful not to give it faster than your dog can swallow it. Do not try to give all of the liquid at once, since this may cause choking or vomiting. Your dog may spit out some of the medication. If this occurs, do not re-administer another dose unless you feel he spit out the entire dose.
8. Hold your dog's mouth closed, and have his head in a slightly elevated



position, which will make swallowing easier. Gently rubbing or blowing on your dog's nose may help stimulate him to swallow.

- Wipe off any medication that got on your dog's face using a soft, moist cloth.

**TIP**

You may want to practice first, using water instead of the medication.

10. Give your dog plenty of praise, and possibly a treat. This will make next time easier. And remember, the more efficiently you can give the medication, the easier it is on both of you.

11. Rinse the syringe/dropper with tap water and return the medication to the refrigerator, if necessary.

Although pictures are worth a thousand words, seeing a live demonstration is even better. If your veterinarian prescribes liquid medication for your dog, have one of the veterinary staff show you how to give it.