



DIFFERENT KINDS OF MEDICINES

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Introduction

Most medicines come in a variety of types or formats. Be aware, though, that some medicines (particularly rare or unusual ones) only come in one type. Also, some may be more effective in one type than another.

Liquid

The active part of the medicine is combined with a liquid to make it easier to take or better absorbed. A liquid may also be called a 'mixture', 'solution', or 'syrup'. Many common liquids are now available without any added coloring or sugar.

Tablet

The active ingredient is combined with another substance and pressed into a round or oval solid shape. There are different types of tablets. Soluble or dispersible tablets can safely be dissolved in water.

Capsules

The active part of the medicine is contained inside a plastic shell that dissolves slowly in the stomach. You can take some capsules apart and mix the contents with your child's favorite food. Others need to be swallowed whole, so the medicine isn't absorbed until the stomach acid breaks down the capsule shell.

Other types of medicine:

Topical medicines

These are creams, lotions, or ointments applied directly onto the skin. They come in tubs, bottles, or tubes depending on the type of medicine. The active part of the medicine is mixed with another substance, making it easy to apply to the skin.

Suppositories

The active part of the medicine is combined with another substance and pressed into a 'bullet shape' so it can be inserted into the bottom. Suppositories mustn't be swallowed.

Drops

These are often used where the active part of the medicine works best if it reaches the affected area directly. They tend to be used for the eye, ears, or nose.

Inhalers

The active part of the medicine is released under pressure directly into the lungs. Young children may need to use a 'spacer' device to take the medicine properly. Inhalers can be difficult to use at first so your pharmacist will show you how to use them.

Injections

There are different types of injection, in how and where they're injected. Subcutaneous or SC injections are given just under the surface of the skin. Intramuscular or IM injections are given

into a muscle. Intrathecal injections are given into the fluid around the spinal cord. Intravenous or IV injections are given into a vein. Some injections can be given at home but most are given at your doctor's surgery or in the hospital.

Implants or patches

These medicines are absorbed through the skin, such as nicotine patches for help in giving up smoking, or contraceptive implants.

Tablets you don't swallow (known as buccal or sublingual tablets or liquids)

These look like normal tablets or liquids, but you don't swallow them. Buccal medicines are held in the cheek so the mouth lining absorbs the active ingredient. Sublingual medicines work in the same way but are put underneath the tongue. Buccal and sublingual medicines tend only to be given in very specific circumstances.

Further tips

When we're prescribing medicine, remember to ask us about the different formats available. If you know from experience your child prefers tablets to liquids, please let us know. Wherever possible, we'll prescribe the medicine in a format that makes it easier for your child to take it. You can also discuss this with your pharmacist when you hand in the prescription.

Tablet



Tablet



Capsule



Liquid



Topical medicines



Suppositories



Drops



Inhaler



Injection



Tablets you don't swallow (known as buccal or sublingual tablets or liquids)



Proper way of giving medicine and timings

The dosage of medicine always depends on what the doctor prescribes to the patients.

Every 8 hours means calculate every 8 hours

3x a day means calculate every 8 hours

2x a day means calculate every 12 hours

1x a day means calculate every 24 hours

Before giving any medication to the patient always remember to take note of the following:

- ✓ The right patient
- ✓ The right drug
- ✓ The right dose
- ✓ The right route
- ✓ And the right time.