



**Animal Cardiology  
Specialists of Nevada**

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### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

- Some pets are easy to medicate, while others may prove very challenging.
- Most medications can be crushed and put in a small portion of canned or other tasty foods. After they have eaten this portion with the medication, you may follow with their regular meal.
  - Medication may be bitter so use small amounts of stronger flavored or smelling foods that will encourage them to eat the medication, then follow with their main meal.
  - Do not add medication to their normal meal as pets can develop a food aversion if they taste medication within their meal. This can cause them to become leery of their meals and not want to eat for fear that there will be a medication hidden within.
- Treats such as Greenies™ or Pill Pockets™ can be helpful when administering tablets.
  - We recommend using a small piece of the edible clay-like material to coat the tablet instead of inserting the tablet into the entire pocket. This will prevent them from feeling the need to chew and accidentally bite into the tablet or capsule.
  - You may also coat the tablet, then use the clay as an adhesive to attach other delightful treats such as chicken to tuna to the tablet to make it more appealing.
- Small amounts of cheese, peanut butter, or marshmallow can be used to hide tablets
  - Be sure to read the ingredients on the label to avoid any toxic items such as xylitol.
- You may crush the medication, mix it with a small amount of water, low-sodium chicken broth, or baby food; draw the liquid into a syringe, and give it slowly into the side of the mouth.
  - Check with your veterinary staff before doing so, but many times, medications may be crushed together and given in the same syringe if they are due at the same time.
- Avoid high-salt treats in patients with congestive heart failure when possible

#### **Tips for Medicating Cats**

- Hold the top of the head by placing your thumb on one side of the upper jaw and your fingers on the other. Tilt the top of the head up so their nose is facing the ceiling. Holding the pill with your thumb and forefinger, use your third finger to gently push down on the lower front teeth to open their mouth. Drop the pill towards the back of their throat.
- It's important to try and get the tablet as far back on the tongue as possible to ensure swallowing and reduce the potential for them to taste the tablet. The faster that you can get the tablet to the back of their throat and close their mouth, the less stressed will be, helping to increase your chances for success.
- A pill gun or pill popper can be used to hold the tablet and help avoid being accidentally bitten.
- Follow with a high-value food item or treat to ensure swallowing and make the experience more positive.

#### **Tips for Medicating Dogs**

- If your dog will not willingly take a treat you may need to administer the pill by hand. In dogs with longer noses, hold over the upper jaw with your fingers on one side and thumb on the other side. While holding the pill with your thumb and index finger, place your 3rd finger on their lower front teeth to assist in opening their mouth. Hold their head upwards and drop the tablet as far to the back of the throat as possible, immediately closing their mouth to encourage them to swallow.
- In dogs with shorter noses, you would hold their head the same way as a cat with your fingers on one side of their jaw and thumb on the other side. While holding the pill with your thumb and index finger, place your 3rd finger on their lower front teeth to assist in opening their mouth. Hold their head upwards and drop the tablet as far to the back of the throat as possible, immediately closing their mouth to encourage them to swallow.
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