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GIVING PILLS TO YOUR DOG

If your veterinarian has prescribed pills for your dog, don't worry. Giving pills to your pet at home is simply a matter of a little know-how and plenty of praise:

- Gently take hold of the head from above, placing your thumb and fingers on either side of the muzzle. Squeeze firmly in and up just behind the canine teeth. The dog's mouth should open.
- Use your free hand to hold on to the pill while lowering the animal's jaw. With the mouth open wide, place the pill as far back on the tongue as possible, pushing it even further with your index finger.
- Gently close and hold the muzzle while your dog swallows. You can encourage this by stroking the throat downward. Finally, give your dog lots of praise and reinforcement each time he/she swallows a pill.

Remember:

1. The more quickly you perform the above steps, the better.
2. Film-coated pills are best. They go down easier and don't dissolve as quickly, which is important if it takes you more than one try.
3. If you can't get the pill down, try disguising it in something your dog loves, such as peanut butter or cream cheese. Check with your veterinarian, because some medication should not be given with food.
4. Avoid "human" medication. Some, like ibuprofen, can be harmful or fatal.
5. Always comply fully with your veterinarian's dosing instructions, no matter how quickly your dog seems to be getting better.