

Giving a Rectal Suppository

Purpose

A rectal suppository is medicine in the form of a soft pill that goes into the rectum. They may be useful if a child cannot eat or drink.

Supplies needed

1. Suppository
2. Glove or plastic wrap

Preparation

1. Gather up the supplies.
2. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
3. Take the wrapper off the suppository.



Follow these steps

The doctor or nurse will tell you how many suppositories to use and how often to give them. If you have been told to give only half of a suppository, cut it in half **the long way**.

1. Take off your child's underpants or diaper.
2. Put your child on their side, facing away from you.
3. Cover the finger you will use to insert the suppository. A finger cot or glove may be used. A piece of plastic wrap or a plastic sandwich bag may also be used to cover your finger.
4. Wet the covered finger with water.
5. Use water or a water soluble lubricant if needed. Do not use Vaseline® or any other kind of grease or lotion. These may keep the medicine from getting absorbed.
6. Gently push in the suppository about one inch. Put the pointed end in first.
7. Ask your child to try to hold the suppository in the rectum for at least five minutes. If your child is too young to do this, hold the buttocks together for at least five minutes. This prevents the suppository from being pushed out. It lets the suppository melt so the medicine can start to work.
8. Wash your hands again with soap and warm water.

Special directions

Rectal suppositories are to be used only in the rectum. They should never be put in the mouth.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.