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Administering Medications

Just like you, your dog is going to get sick occasionally and you'll likely come home from the veterinarian's with some medication to administer. Learning how to do it right will make the process easier for both you and your dog. Always follow the instructions given by your veterinarian. Be sure to administer the full amount of medication over the number of days instructed by your veterinarian.

Tablets & Capsules:

Step 1

- Place the pill between the thumb and index finger of one hand.
- Firmly grasp the upper jaw with the thumb and index finger of the other hand behind the canine teeth.

Step 2

- Gently fold the upper lip over the teeth as you open the mouth. This will reduce the chance of being bitten.

Step 3

- Rotate your wrist to tilt the head upward.
- Use your middle finger to slowly open the lower jaw.

Step 4

- Keep your middle finger over the small incisor teeth and deposit the pill as far back on the tongue as possible.
- Immediately close the mouth. Keeping your hand over the mouth, gently put the head down to facilitate swallowing.

Step 5

- Stroke the throat or blow on the nose to encourage swallowing.

Liquids & Syrups: (Read the label for proper dosage. If instructed, shake the contents of the bottle.)

Step 1

- Fill a syringe or dropper with medication before starting.
- Liquid medication is poured into the pouch between the teeth and cheek.
- Hold your dog's jaw closed and tilt the head back slightly.

Step 2

- Gently squirt the medication into the pouch between the teeth and cheek with the dropper or syringe.

Step 3

- Hold the mouth closed.
- Stroke the throat or blow on the nose to encourage swallowing.

Step 4

- Should your dog gag or cough out the medication, lower his head and calm him down.
- Wait a few minutes then try again.

Helpful Hints:

- Always read the label instructions carefully.
- Ask your veterinarian if the medication can be given with food or must be given on an empty stomach. If it can be given with food, just put the pill into a small treat such as cheese or peanut butter or a small amount of food recommended by your veterinarian.
- Get a friend or family member to help.
- Avoid medicating your dog on the floor or in your arms. Place the dog on a table with a non-slip surface.
- When administering medication, stay calm. Your pet can sense if you are nervous making it more difficult to administer or apply the treatment.
- Always praise and reward your pet with a treat.