Giving Your Dog Oral Medications

1. Get all the drugs ready and lay them out next to where you are going to give them. This includes shaking up oral liquids and drawing the correct dose into the syringe. Tablets and capsules may be wrapped in a small piece of meat or bread that your dog likes.

2. Relax! Ask your dog to come to you in a relaxed, happy voice. If your dog senses that you are upset or anxious, it will be, too!

3. Take your dog to a corner, and face his rear end into the corner so he cannot back away from you.

4. Using your free hand, calmly grasp your dog’s muzzle from above with your fingers on one side and thumb on the other with tips at corner of your dog’s mouth.

5. Squeeze behind the upper canine teeth (“fangs”) and gently tilt its head back until his chin is pointing upwards. His lower jaw should automatically open a little bit. Use one of the other fingers of your other hand to open the right hand to open the lower jaw further by pushing on the bottom teeth with one of your fingers to pry it open.

6. Quickly place the pill as far back in your dog’s mouth as possible, preferably on the back of the tongue. Do not place your hand too far in, however, or your dog may choke and gag.

7. If you are giving liquid medication, do not raise your pet’s chin up, but instead, introduce the tip of the syringe just past the lower teeth and squirt small amounts into your dog’s mouth. Pause between squirts to allow him to swallow the medication without gagging or choking.

8. Gently lower his head and close your dog’s mouth by wrapping your fingers around its muzzle. Gently rubbing or blowing on your dog’s nose may help stimulate him to swallow.

9. Give your dog plenty of praise, and possibly a treat. This will make next time easier. And remember, the quicker you can give the medication, the easier it is on both of you.

10. The most important part of drug therapy is getting all of the drug that your veterinarian has prescribed into your dog for the entire time that he has prescribed therapy. If you have difficulty getting all of the medication into your dog, call your veterinarian for advice or assistance.