IWK Health

6 Steps to Success in Pill Swallowing

1 Find a comfortable spot and discuss the plan with your child. Explain the reason for needing the medication. Understanding the "Why" will help them in being on board with developing this new skill. Look at this as developing a skill, reflect on another skill they have learned (ex. Riding a bike). Discuss how that skill didn't come right away, it took practice and encouragement which is what you will do here.

2 With the health care team, determine the goal size for pill swallowing practice . You can use candy to practice swallowing different size pills. There are 7 different sizes of candy, determine which one will be the same size as the medication. If it is only the size of #4, just go that far. Model the process for the child. Sit up, place the "pill" on your tongue, take a sip of water and swallow.

3 Now it's their turn! Start with #1 which is the smallest "pill" once they have successfully swallowed that, do it two more times, and then move on to the next size. Give lots of praise with a success, this will help build confidence.

4 Ensure that they have successfully swallowed each size three times before moving to the next one. Keep track of the success on the challenge chart (see QR code below) so that you remember how far you have gone. This is a great visual reminder of their success and can help motivate them to keep going.

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5 If things become tricky, and they have trouble with a certain size, Stop. Go back and try the size before and focus on the success. Always end the session on a positive note. You can try again another time and start where you left off the previous time. You don't want them to have a negative association with swallowing pills. Don't forget to tell them you are proud of them for trying.

6 Try again! Starting with the biggest "pill" from your last session go from there. Don't forget to remain calm and use encouragement. Once you reach the goal give lots of praise! Give a certificate to help them celebrate their newfound skill and achievement!

Tips

Try the challenge!

NAME: _____

Level	TRY 1	TRY 2	YOU DID IT!	
1- Sprinkles	⚪	⚪	🟣	
2- Cake Decoration	⚪	⚪	🟣	
3- Nerd	⚪	⚪	🟣	
4- Tic Tac	⚪	⚪	🟣	
5- M&M Mini	⚪	⚪	🟣	
6- Skittles	⚪	⚪	🟣	
7- Mike & Ike	⚪	⚪	🟣	

You did it!
Certificate