

How to Give Your Child a Rectal Suppository

Medicines come in several forms. A rectal suppository is one way to give medicine if the medicine cannot or will not be taken by mouth.

Helpful Hints

- If the suppository is too soft to insert, chill it in the fridge for 30 minutes or run it under cold water before taking off the wrapper.
- Distract your child before and after giving it. Try reading, playing music, or a back rub.
- Some parents may become anxious when they have to give a suppository. Keep in mind it is medicine that your child needs. Once you have given it the first time, you will see how easy it is to do.

How to Insert

1. Wash your hands.
2. Remove the foil wrapper and wet with a few drops of cold water or a water-soluble lubricant, such as K-Y Jelly®. Do not use Vaseline® since this keeps it from melting.

3. Put on plastic gloves or cover your fingertip with plastic wrap, such as Saran Wrap®.
4. Place your child on:
 - On either side with the knees bent toward the chest.
 - On back with legs raised as if to change a diaper.
 - On stomach with knees to chest or over your lap.
5. Hold the suppository between your thumb and index finger.
6. With your other hand, open the buttock cheeks until you can see the anal opening.
7. Gently insert the round end into the anal opening using the tip of your index finger. You will know if you have inserted it far enough if it does not come right back out.
8. Gently hold the buttock cheeks closed to keep your child from pushing it out. Do this for about 10 minutes.
9. Body heat causes the suppository to melt and begin to take effect.

If you have questions about giving a suppository to your child, please call your health care provider.