

Learning How to Swallow a Pill



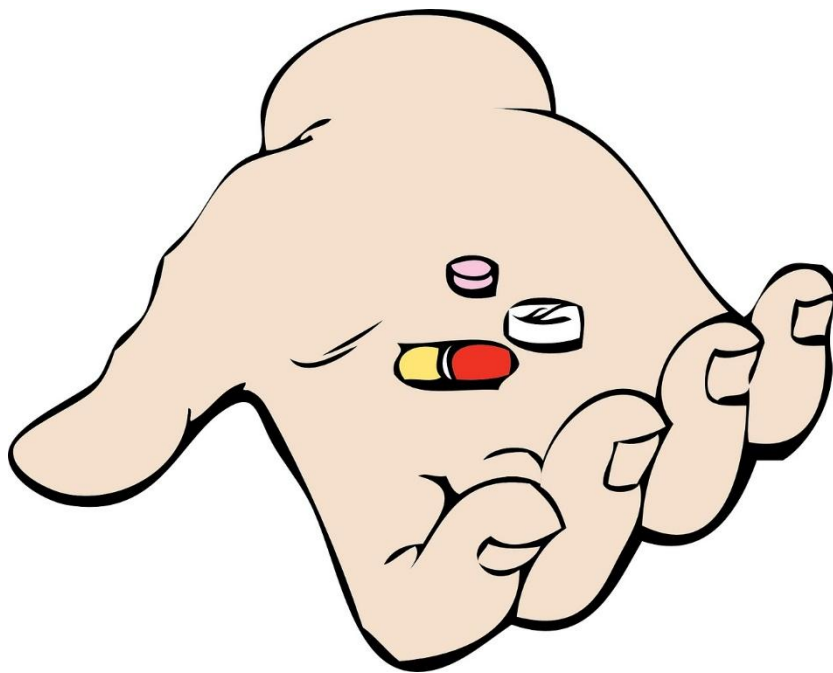
A note for families...

If your son/daughter has any trouble with swallowing, please discuss this with their doctor before trying to learn how to swallow a pill. He/she should be able to swallow “chunky” foods, like oatmeal or chunky applesauce, before trying to swallow a pill. The Down Syndrome team at MGHfC and Mass General can help your son/daughter with any concerns with swallowing.

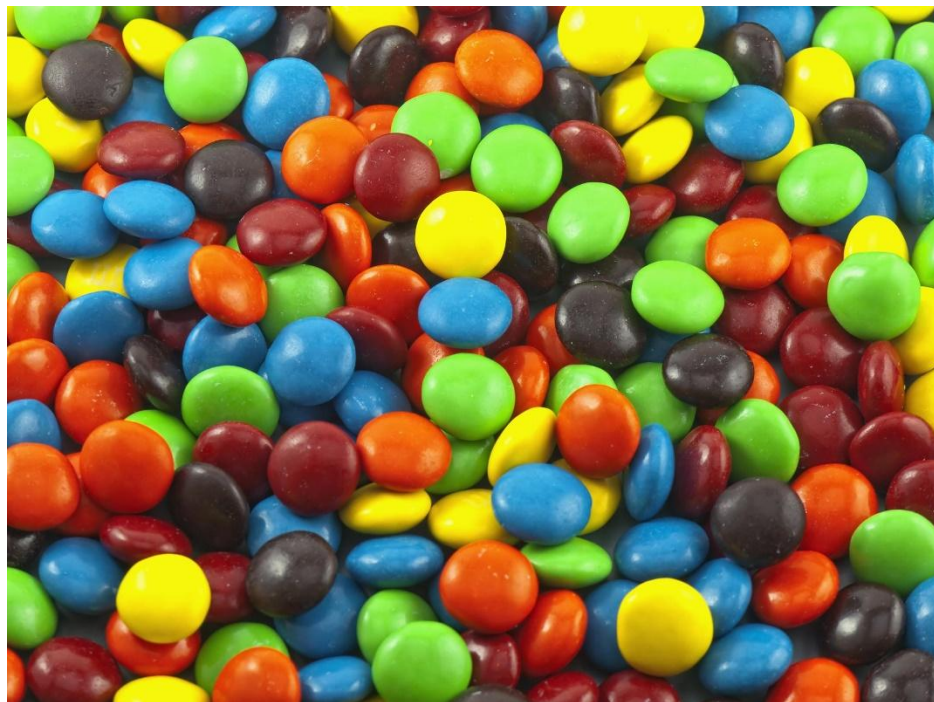


I am ready to learn how to swallow a pill. Swallowing a pill does not hurt. With practice, I can learn how to do it myself.

My family or my doctor can help me practice until I am ready to swallow pills on my own. If I feel nervous or have questions, my family or my doctor can help me.



This story can help me learn different ways to swallow a pill. I can choose which way works best for me. Learning to swallow a pill can make it easier to take any medications that my doctor gives me. This will help me stay healthy and happy.



One way I can learn is by swallowing my favorite candies, like Nerds®, Tic Tacs® or M&M's®. I should not chew the candies. I should try my best to swallow it in one piece.

I should be careful not to choke on these candies. My family should always be with me when I practice swallowing candies.



I can also practice by swallowing a sip of water or milk while looking at the floor. This will help me focus on my swallowing.

Once I can swallow the water or milk, I can try swallowing it with a pill.

Here is how I can practice swallowing a pill with liquid.

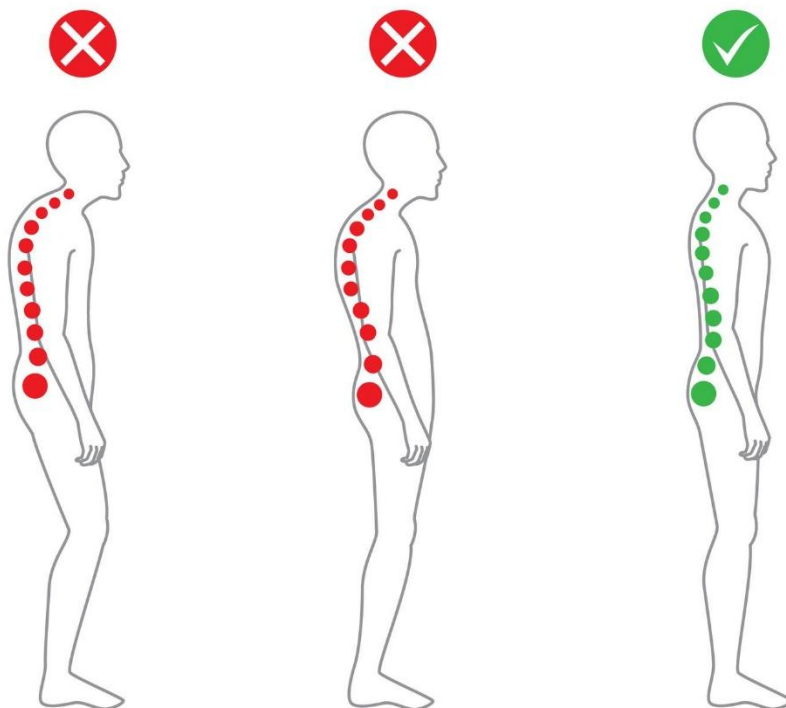
1. I will put the pill in my mouth. Some people put the pill on the back of their tongue and others put it in the center of their tongue. I can practice to see what is best for me.
2. Once the pill is in place, I can take a sip of liquid.
3. Then I will tilt my head down touching my chin to my chest.
4. Now I can swallow the pill while my head is tilted down and I am looking at the floor.





I can also practice swallowing a pill with pureed food, like oatmeal, applesauce, pudding or yogurt.

I can practice with just pureed food at first. Then I can practice swallowing food with a pill.



Good posture and turning my head to the left or right can also help me swallow a pill. Good posture means to stand up straight and tall.



Swallowing a pill takes lots of practice, but over time, I can learn how to do it myself. I can practice as much as I need to.

If I feel nervous or frustrated, I can take three slow, deep breaths before I try again. Deep breaths help me stay calm and relaxed. I can also ask my family or my doctor for help.

Rev. 9/2017 *Images courtesy of Pixabay®.*

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