



Pilling A Cat

Pilling a cat – these words evoke fear in most people. Sometimes the medication can be given in the cat's food, but many times the cat may not be eating well or the cat can tell you've "tainted" his/her food and won't eat it. Fortunately, most cats will tolerate being pilled if it's done correctly.



Tips Before Starting:

- Have everything you need ready before you get your (for example, have the pill out and already cut (if necessary) and a treat ready for your cat afterwards).
- Avoid over-restraining your cat. The harder you try to hold or restrain him/her, the harder he/she will fight to get away from you. Always use the least amount of restraint possible to do the job.
- Sometimes it's easier to pill a cat on an elevated surface such as a table or countertop (that way kitty is off the floor so he/she can't get away so easily).
- Talk in a slow, calming voice to your cat throughout the entire process. Continually reassure him/her.
- Always be consistent – cats feel comfortable with routines. Use the same spot for pilling each time, at the same time of day. Always use the technique each time.

Steps to for Pilling:

1. Have your cat facing away from you, so if he tries to back up, he'll just back up into your body.
2. Use your dominant hand to hold the pill between your thumb and forefinger.
3. Use your other hand to hold the cat's head on either side of his face, using his cheek bones to hold onto. Your hand should be grasping each side of the head from the top.
4. Gently tilt his head upward (nose pointing to the ceiling). This will loosen his lower jaw so it's easier for you to open, and will allow gravity to help get the pill as far back in his mouth as possible.
5. Use your middle finger of the hand holding the pill to open the cat's lower jaw so you can quickly poke the pill as far back into his/her mouth with your forefinger as you can. Quickly retrieve your fingers to prevent them being inadvertently bitten.
6. Quickly close his/her mouth with your hands and massage his/her throat for a moment to encourage swallowing. Sometimes gently blowing on a cat's nose will also stimulate them to swallow.
7. You'll know he/she has swallowed the pill when they lick their lips, meow, or hiss.
8. Praise him/her lavishly and offer a yummy treat as a reward. Have a little attention-session immediately afterwards to let him/her know that this isn't such a bad thing after all. You want to end it on a positive note – that's what he/she will remember.