

Tips and Tools for Helping Your Child Take Their Medication

Treatment for pediatric cancer and blood disorders often includes detailed medication regimens. Some children may experience difficulties taking medications on a consistent basis. Use of specific strategies may increase success with medication routines.

- **Possible Challenges with Medication Routines:**
 - Taking medication consistently:
 - Correct amount
 - Correct time of day
 - Correct way (i.e. with food, on an empty stomach)
 - Responsibility for medication routine:
 - Single vs. multiple caretakers
 - Parent supervision vs. child independence
- **Helpful Strategies:**
 - Talk it through: Have an honest discussion with your child about why they need to take medications and how it is administered. Be sure to use language that they will understand.
 - Organize the routine: Keep all medications in the same place, set medication reminders (alarms, written), and keep track of supplies/time for refills.
 - Consider adjustments: Talk to your medical providers about options that may make taking medication easier.
 - Determine if medication comes in pill vs. liquid, if flavoring can be added, or if medication administration times can be moved or combined.
 - Set the stage for success: Keep medication times consistent, don't interrupt a fun activity to give medications, reduce distractions, and provide consistent supervision.
 - Pair success with positivity: Provide your child with verbal praise for participating in their medication routine. For particularly difficult hurdles, consider using a sticker or prize chart to encourage success.
- **Who to Ask for Help:**
 - Medical providers: May be able to modify type of medication (i.e. pill vs. liquid) or suggest other modifications.
 - Psychosocial providers: May be able to assist with identifying barriers and problem-solving with your family's unique circumstances in mind.