

# Pill Swallowing Techniques

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- Use a small, hard candy to start.
- Remember, your esophagus is much wider than any pill, and it is very flexible and soft, just like your cheek. Don't be afraid that it will get stuck.
- Have good posture; stand up if that helps.
- Place the candy on the back of your tongue.
- Take a little sip of water. A little is usually better than a lot when swallowing.
- Then it is time to swallow the candy! Try different head positions, as shown in the video.
  - Straight forward just like you do when drinking
  - Turning your head to the side can open up your throat – try turning to both the left and right
  - Lifting your head up can make it easy for the pill to fall down quickly, and then add a little shake to your head like a duck!
  - Bending your neck down can make some people feel more comfortable
- Practice for two weeks with the candy. Test out different head positions each time and see what works best for you. Record which position feels best. You may change your mind on what feels best over the course of the two weeks.
- Then you can swallow pills!

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## About This Technique

**Watch video for specific directions.**

<https://youtu.be/Zxqs7fIHJQc>

Bonnie Kaplan at the University of Calgary in the Behavioural Research Unit / Dept of Paediatrics has worked with hundreds of children and adults to develop a way to learn how to swallow pills. This method, based on head posture, is helping people who have difficulty swallowing their medication.

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## Head Position Preference Sheet

Circle Day 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Candy Used \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the face to indicate how easy or hard it was!

Straight					
Up					
Down					
Left					
Right					

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