

How to use an oral syringe



What is an oral syringe?

An oral syringe is a precise way to measure liquid medicine. Medicine doses for babies and children are based on their weight. The doses are very specific, and you must measure them carefully.

Do not use kitchen teaspoons or soup spoons to measure medicines. They will not give you the correct dose and should not be used to measure medicine.

Oral syringes come in different sizes. Milliliters (mL) and cubic centimeters (cc) are the same thing.

- You may need to measure liquid medicine in a fraction (or part) of a milliliter.
- Ask your child's doctor or pharmacist to show you exactly which line to measure to on the syringe.
- If the syringe comes with a cap, throw away the cap before using the syringe. Your child could choke on the cap.

Where do I get an oral syringe?

You can get an oral syringe from your drugstore or pharmacy. Before buying or using an oral syringe, check the numbers and lines on the side of the syringe to make sure it can measure the right dose for your child.

How do I convert teaspoons to milliliters?

Use this table to convert teaspoons (tsp) to milliliters (mL).

Teaspoons (tsp)	Milliliters (mL)
¼ tsp	1.25 mL
½ tsp	2.5 mL
¾ tsp	3.75 mL
1 tsp	5 mL
1 and ½ tsp	7.5 mL

How do I convert tablespoons to milliliters?

1 tablespoon (Tbsp) is equal to 15 milliliters (mL).

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

How to use an oral syringe, continued

What should I do before giving medicine to my child?

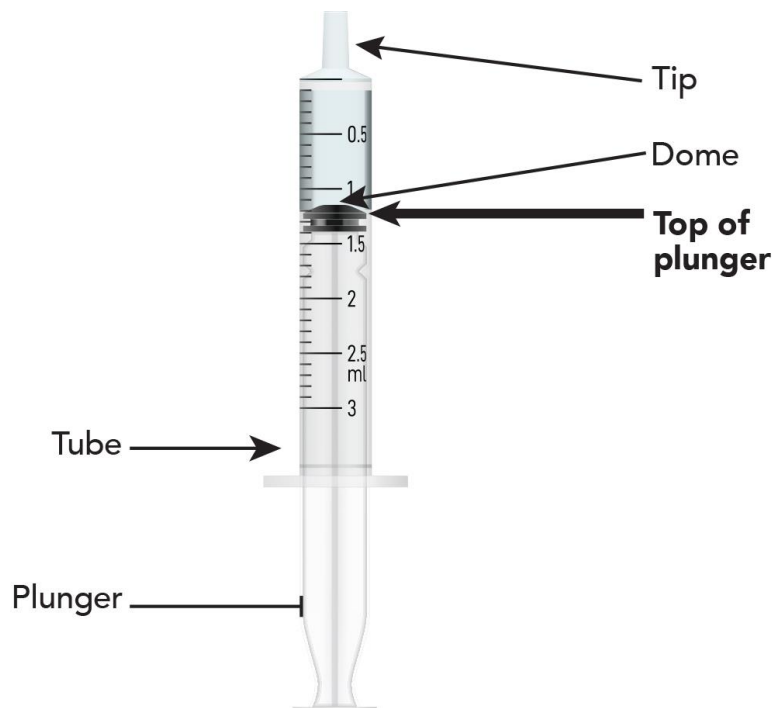
Wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Make sure you know any special instructions about the medicine. Talk with your child's doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

What are the "5 Rights" for giving medicine?

1. **Right medicine.** Know the name of the medicine. Read the label on the medicine bottle 3 times.
2. **Right dose.** Know the right dose or amount of medicine to give as directed by your child's doctor.
3. **Right time and frequency.** Know what time of day to give the medicine and how often.
4. **Right way.** Know how to give the medicine.
5. **Right child.** Make sure you give the right medicine to the right child.

How do I read an oral syringe?

- Use the top of the plunger to measure the correct volume of medicine.
- Syringes can come in many different sizes, with different measurements. Always use the smallest syringe possible for each medicine.

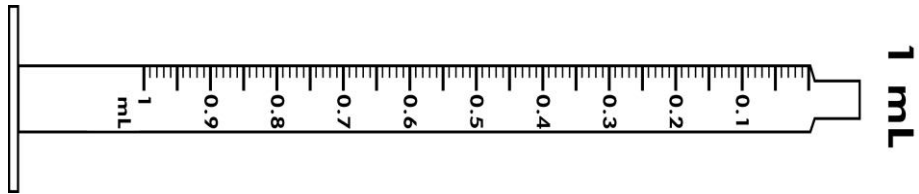


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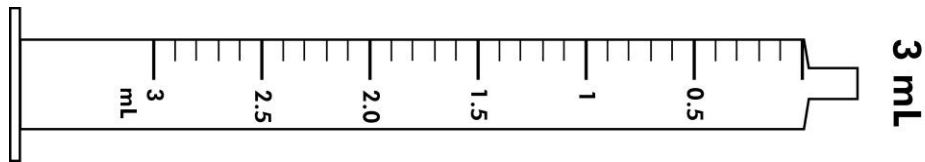
How to use an oral syringe, continued

Some different syringe sizes

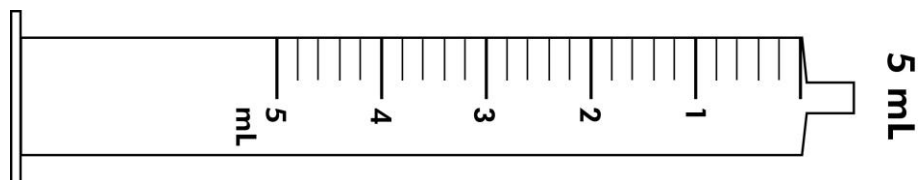
1 milliliter (mL) syringe



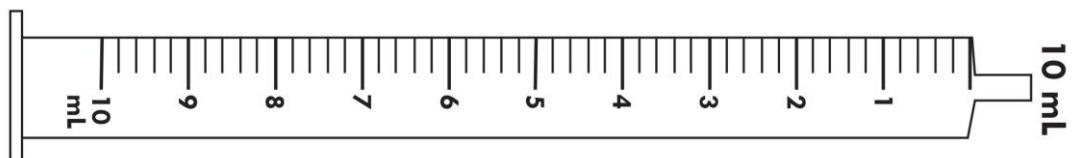
3 milliliters (mL) syringe



5 milliliters (mL) syringe



10 milliliters (mL) syringe



See pages 7 to 12 for more information on measurements and practice worksheets.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

How to use an oral syringe, continued

How do I use an oral syringe to measure medicine?

Follow these steps to measure your child's liquid medicine:

- Shake the liquid medicine bottle well, and put it on a hard surface.
- Take the cap off the bottle.
- Look at the numbers on the side of the syringe to determine how much medicine to pull up.
- Put the syringe into the opening of the bottle. Make sure the tip of the syringe is in the liquid medicine. (You can also pour a small amount of medicine into a clean medicine cup. Then, you can put the tip of the syringe in the medicine cup instead of the bottle.)
- Pull the plunger on the syringe until you have the right amount of medicine in the syringe.
 - The top of the rubber stopper should be at the right volume line for the dose you need to give. Ask the pharmacist to mark the right line if you are not sure.
 - You may need to tilt the bottle so the tip of the syringe stays in the liquid and you do not get air in the syringe.
 - Check the dose by looking at the syringe at eye level.
- If there are air bubbles, hold the syringe with the tip up and flick the syringe. This should make the air bubbles go to the top. Press the plunger to push out the air bubbles.
- Once the air bubbles are gone, make sure the top of the plunger is at the right volume line. You may need to add or remove medicine.

What is a bottle adapter?

A bottle adapter fits around the neck of the liquid medicine bottle. It can help you draw the medicine out of the bottle. You can buy adapters from your drugstore or pharmacy. Ask your pharmacist to show you how to use a bottle adapter.

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How to use an oral syringe, continued

What are some tips for giving medicine using an oral syringe?

DO:

- Give all medicines as directed by your child's doctor.
- Teach your child that medicines are used to help them feel better.
- Have your child sit up to take medicine. If your child is a baby, you may hold them like you are feeding them a bottle.
- Put the tip of the syringe into the inside cheek of your child's mouth.
- Let your child suck on the medicine. Slowly push the plunger to give small amounts of medicine at a time.
- Let your child swallow small amounts before giving more. This will help prevent choking and spitting.
- Offer your child some water or their favorite drink to wash out their mouth. You may want to wrap a clean, wet, paper towel around your finger and swab your child's gums, cheeks and tongue afterwards.
- Always praise your child for taking their medicine. Give your child a hug.



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DO NOT:

- Give medicine to your child if they are lying down.
- Give medicine if your child's head is bent backwards. Your child cannot swallow if their head is positioned this way.
- Squirt the medicine into the back of the throat. This could cause the medicine to go into your child's windpipe and could cause your child to choke.
- Lay down your baby or child until they have swallowed all of the medicine in their mouth.
- Mix medicines together unless your child's doctor says it is OK.
- Put medicine in formula or juice unless your child's doctor says it is OK.
- Give medicines in larger doses, more often, or for longer periods of time than your child's doctor prescribes.
- Tell your child that medicines are candy.

How do I clean an oral syringe?

- Pull the plunger completely out to separate the syringe parts.
- Wash both parts with warm water after each use.
- Dry well.
- Do not share syringes with other children or family members to avoid spreading germs.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

How to use an oral syringe, continued

When should I call 911?

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department **right away** if your child shows signs of severe allergic reaction to a medicine, such as:

- Hives (raised, reddish skin bumps)
- Swelling of the mouth, eyes or face
- Trouble breathing or wheezing
- Changes in the way they normally act
- Blue or purple nails or around the mouth
- Chest pain or tightness
- Feeling faint or not being as awake and alert as normal

Also call your child's doctor if you have questions or concerns about:

- How your child looks or feels.
- Your child's medicines.

What are some general safety tips about medicines?

- Always read the label before giving medicine to your child.
- When not using an oral syringe, use a pediatric measuring device to measure exact doses of liquid medicines. You can get one at your drugstore or pharmacy. **Do not** use kitchen spoons or soup spoons to measure medicines.
- Watch to make sure your child swallows their whole dose of medicine.
- Keep all medicines in their labeled container where your child cannot get to them. If possible, store all medicines in a locked cabinet.
- Throw away all medicines after the expiration date on the container or when your child has finished the prescribed dose.
- Tell your child's doctor, dentist or the emergency department about any medicines your child is taking. Take the medicines with you.
- Call the Georgia Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or call 911 **right away** if your child takes too much medicine or has a bad reaction to their medicine.

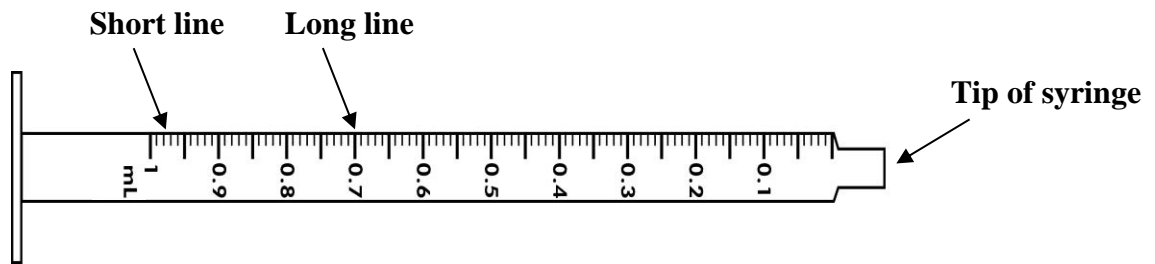
This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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How to use an oral syringe, continued

For medicine doses less than 1 mL

Some medicines may come in very small amounts. If the amount is less than 1 mL, it may need to be measured in a 1 mL syringe. Ask your pharmacist to mark the syringe to help you measure correctly.



In this 1 mL syringe:

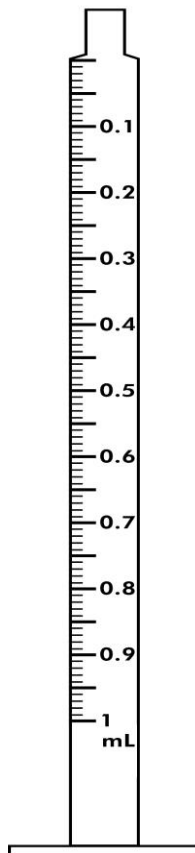
- Each long line is equal to 0.05 mL
- Each short line is equal to 0.01 mL (0.01 → 0.02 → 0.03 → 0.04 → 0.05 mL)

Let's practice

Example #1

You are giving 0.5 mL of a medicine.

Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.



In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

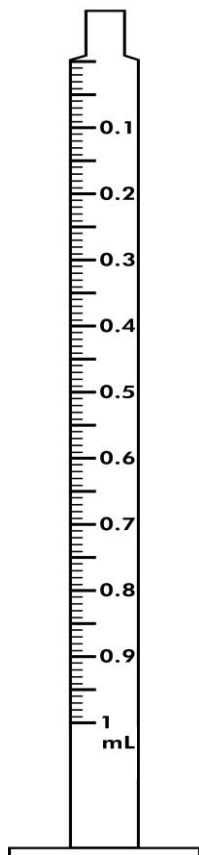
How to use an oral syringe, continued

Let's practice

Example #2

You are giving 0.85 mL of a medicine.

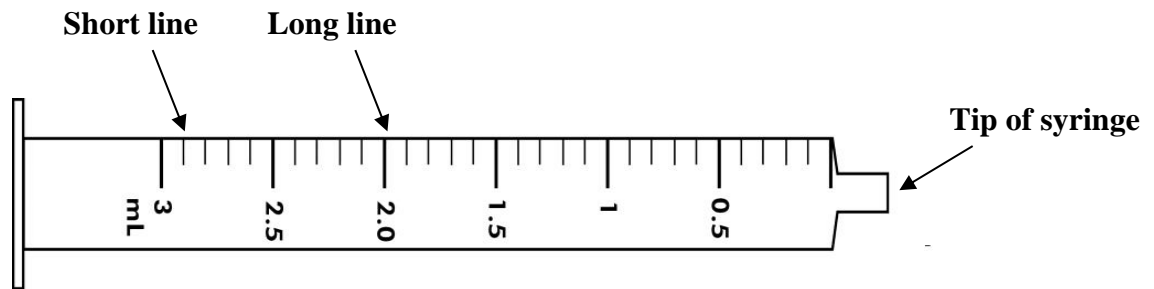
Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.



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How to use an oral syringe, continued

For medicine doses up to 3 mL



In this 3 mL syringe:

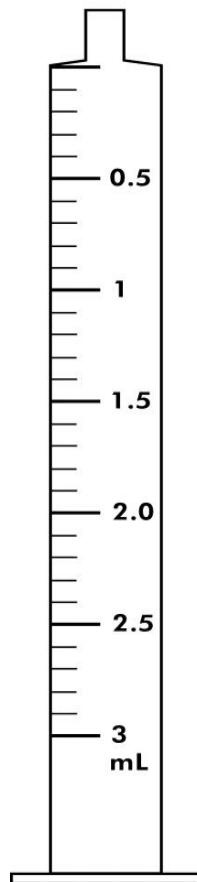
- Each long line is equal to 0.5 mL
- Each short line is equal to 0.1 mL (0.1 → 0.2 → 0.3 → 0.4 → 0.5 mL)

Let's practice!

Example #1

You are giving 2.5 mL of a medicine.

Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.



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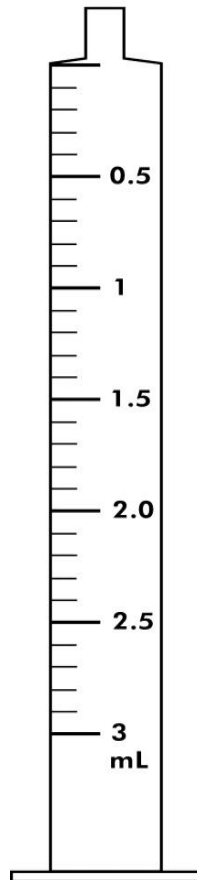
How to use an oral syringe, continued

Let's practice

Example #2

You are giving 1.3 mL of a medicine.

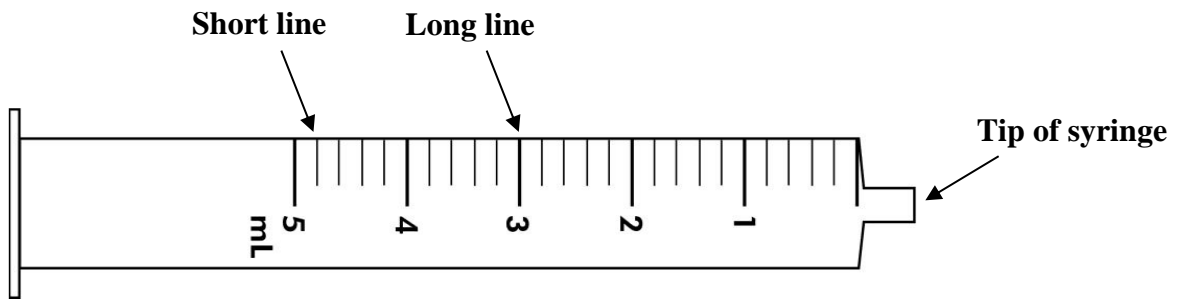
Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.



In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

How to use an oral syringe, continued

For medicine doses up to 5 mL



In this 5 mL syringe:

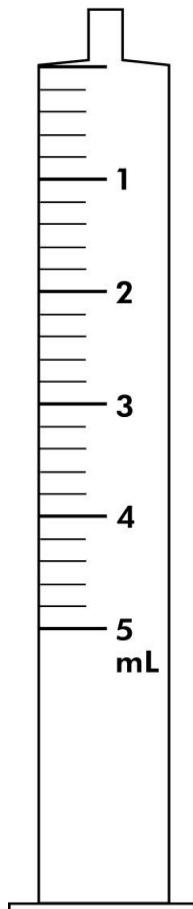
- Each long line is equal to 1 mL
- Each short line is equal to 0.2 mL (0.2 → 0.4 → 0.6 → 0.8 → 1 mL)

Let's practice

Example #1

You are giving 4.2 mL of a medicine.

Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.



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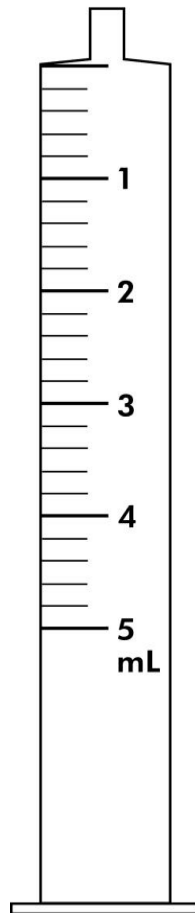
How to use an oral syringe, continued

Let's practice

Example #2

You are giving 3.5 mL of a medicine.

Color in the syringe to show how much medicine you would put in the syringe.

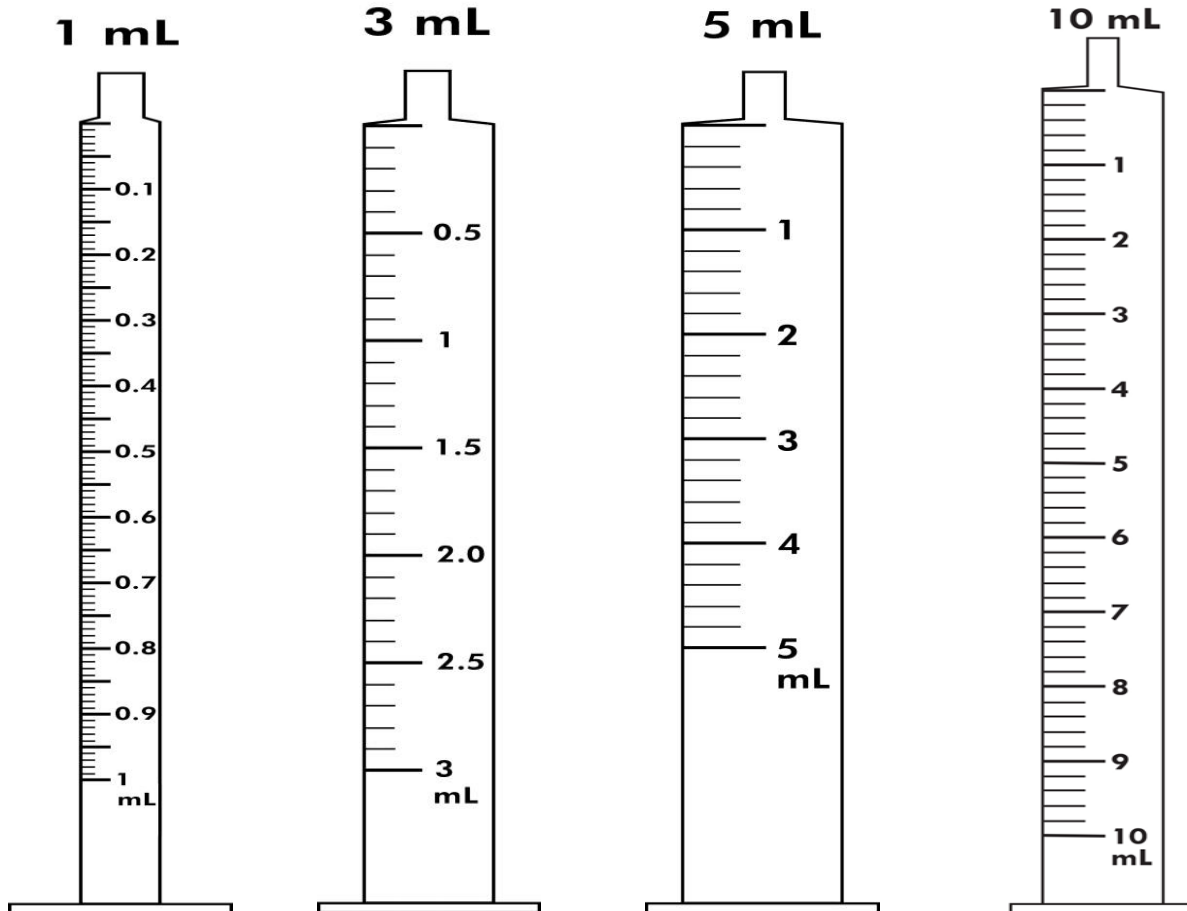


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How to use an oral syringe, continued

Your child's medicine dose

Always follow your doctor's advice on how much medicine to give
(even if it no longer matches the information on this page)



Medicine _____
Strength _____
Amount _____
Dose _____
Time _____
Route _____

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