

## Preparing the Child

Every child requires psychological preparation for parenteral administration of medication and supportive care during the procedure (see earlier in chapter). Even if children have received several injections, they rarely become accustomed to the discomfort and have as much right as any other child to understanding and patience from those giving the injection.

## Oral Administration

The oral route is preferred for administering medications to children because of the ease of administration. Most medications are dissolved or suspended in liquid preparations. Although some children are able to swallow or chew solid medications at an early age, solid preparations are not recommended for young children because of the danger of aspiration.

Most pediatric medications come in palatable and colorful preparations for added ease of administration. Some have a slightly unpleasant aftertaste, but most children swallow these liquids with little, if any, resistance. Complaints of dislike from the child can be accepted and the taste can be camouflaged whenever possible. Most pediatric units have preparations available for this purpose (see [Atraumatic Care](#) box).

## Atraumatic Care

### Encouraging a Child's Acceptance of Oral Medication

- Give the child a flavored ice pop or small ice cube to suck to numb the tongue before giving the drug.
- Mix the drug with a small amount ( $\approx 1$  tsp) of sweet-tasting substance, such as honey (except in infants because of the risk of botulism), flavored syrups, jam, fruit purees, sherbet, or ice cream; avoid essential food items because the child may later refuse to eat them.
- Give a “chaser” of water, juice, soft drink, or ice pop or frozen juice bar after the drug.