

How to Crush Medication Properly and Safely

- If you have difficulty swallowing pills and there are no liquid or syrup formulations available, crushing pills may be a reasonable option to help with ease of swallowing.
- Before crushing a pill, ALWAYS confirm with your nurse, pharmacy, and/or healthcare provider that it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Do Not Crush a Pill If:

- The pill is enteric coated: These medications will commonly have EN or EC at the end of their name.
- Sustained Release/Extended Release pills: These medications will commonly have CR, ER, XL, LA, DR, or XR at the end of their names.
- There is no score mark on the pill: A groove or line on the pill indicates that the medication is safe to split apart.
- The label on your medication bottle indicates that the medication cannot be chewed or crushed.

Recommended Pill Crushing Devices

Pill Crusher

Most pill crushers are handheld devices that you twist to grind a pill into a fine powder. Others look like a stapler or garlic press that you grip to crush the pill.

Mortar and Pestle

A mortar is a cup-shaped bowl and a pestle is a club-shaped tool used to grind the pill manually.

Pill Splitter

This handheld device does not crush pills but can split them into halves or quarters so that they are easier to swallow



Administration of Crushed Medication

Pills should be crushed into a fine powder. The medication can be dissolved in a small amount of water or mixed into a small amount of soft food. This ensures you are given the complete dose prescribed by your healthcare provider.

Crushed medication can also be mixed with a small amount of water and drawn up into an oral syringe to be administered under the tongue or against the cheek for ease of swallowing.

Contact HopeWest at any time for assistance or if you have additional questions. A Registered Nurse is available 24/7 including after hours, weekends, and holidays.