Kids Meds

December 1, 2008 By John Borchardt

Ask any parent of an HIV-positive child: Even the liquid versions of drugs for kids taste awful. “Just watch a child’s face when they’re taking some of these things!” says Julie Mennella, PhD, of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. Kids aren’t being stubborn when they resist taking meds. According to Mennella’s gene research, “children have heightened bitter sensitivity compared to adults.”

But swallowing every HIV med dose is key to controlling the virus. How to make the medicine go down? Doctors at the Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle offer *POZ* these tips:

Pharmacists can add flavorings to bitter medicines. Or you can try adding strongly flavored liquids such as chocolate or maple syrup to meds at home.
Before dosing, give the child ice chips or a popsicle (cold dulls taste buds) or a sticky liquid such as maple syrup to coat the tongue.
Follow meds with juice or a lollipop to clobber aftertaste.

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