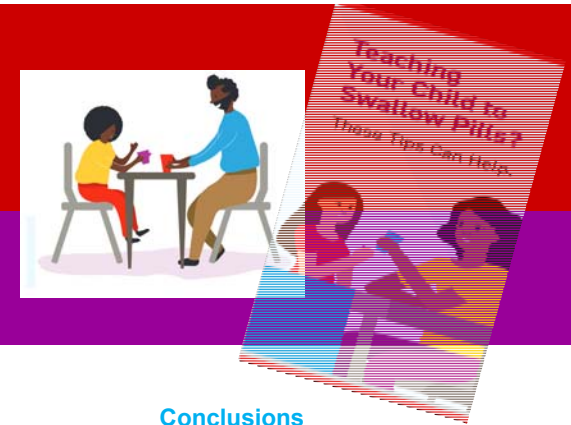


Teaching Your Child to Swallow Pills? These tips can help.



Goal Create an easy-to-read, easy-to-understand guide that empowers and supports parents and caregivers as they help their children learn to swallow pills.

Background

- Many children have difficulty swallowing pills, tablets, or capsules.
- The lack of appropriate materials, methods, and training mean that many children never properly learn this skill.
- Clinical research studies frequently begin before a child-friendly dose is available.
- Studies often require the participant to take the available dose form which is often a pill designed for the adult population.
- Not being able to swallow a pill is sometimes the only issue keeping a child from participating in a study. This means they could miss out on access to a potential new treatment option.

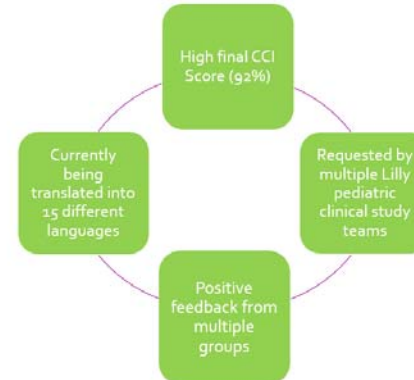
Negative experiences due to failed pill-swallowing attempts in childhood can also create barriers to medication-taking later in adulthood.

Methods

1. **Literature review:** A review of the research confirmed that some parents were indeed struggling to teach their children how to swallow pills. It also informed which pill-swallowing methods were most successful.
2. **Development*:** Health literacy principles were used for content development and information design. Using culturally diverse, kid-friendly images were a high priority.
3. **Assessment*:** Readability assessment was conducted using the CDC Clear Communication Index (CCI).
4. **Testing*:** Formal usability testing was conducted with 7 parents of children unable to swallow pills. Feedback was also collected from parent and pediatric advisory groups both inside and outside of the company.

* Conducted in partnership with CommunicateHealth, Inc.

Results



Example of participant feedback:

“ It sounds almost like I wrote this ... If I were to inform someone or educate them on how to swallow a pill, pretty much everything I read I would say ... It had the feeling like maybe who wrote the brochure was a parent, so they've been through it before. ”

— Participant with a 12-year-old child

Conclusions

- This novel brochure is already filling a much needed gap for pill swallowing training for children who may be candidates for pediatric clinical studies.
- Not being able to swallow pills doesn't just impact kids participating in clinical studies --

This skill is crucial for many kids who need to take medicine since some medicines work better as a pill and others aren't available in a kid-friendlier option like a liquid or chewable tablet.
- This educational brochure can also be useful in other settings beyond clinical research, including health care providers' offices and pharmacies.
- Many adults also have difficulty swallowing pills. A version of this brochure adapted for adults would also be useful.

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