

**Questions to ask yourself before splitting or crushing
non-scored tablets.**

Answering yes to any of the following questions requires further research with a well-known scientific source before cutting the tablet.

1. Is it an enteric coated formulation?
2. Is it a modified release formulation?
3. Is it a combination of active ingredients in the same tablet (ex. Hyzaar, Avalide, Coversyl Plus, etc.)?
4. Does the active ingredient have a narrow therapeutic index?
5. Does the tablet crumble when it's cut?
6. Is the tablet film-coated or enveloped to hide the taste, protect the active ingredient or any other reason?
7. Is the tablet an odd shape?
8. Can the tablet be dangerous to the person manipulating it? (ex. Antineoplastic, cytotoxic, immunosuppressant)?

See List - Generic Name

Oral Dosage Forms Which Should Not Be Crushed or Chewed

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Medication Name (generic)	Reason/Comments
5-aminosalicylic acid	Enteric coated, delayed release. With a glass of water (dissolves in specific area of digestion tract)
Abacavir/lamivudine (Kivexa)	Do not chew
Acamprostate	Acid labile.
Acetaminophen arthritis or 8 hour ER	Use regular acetaminophen or chewable.
Acitretin	Mucous membrane irritant. Swallow whole
Adefovir	
Alendronate	With a full glass of plain water, swallow whole to prevent oropharyngeal ulceration. Solution available. (not covered by ODB)
Alendronate/vitamin D (Fosavance)	Use Alendronate solution and a vitamin D solution. (not covered by ODB)
Alfacalcidol caps	Available in drops 2mg/ml.
Alfuzosin	Prolonged release. Matrix containing alfuzosin
Altretamine (Hexalon)	Antineoplastic
Amantadine	Do not cut or crush. Use syrup. (symmetrel syrup 50mg/5ml)
Aminophylline	Tablet may be halved, sustained release. With a glass of water
Amoxicillin/clavulanic acid	Food ↓ GI side effects
Amphetamine mixed salts (Adderall XR)	Can sprinkle contents of capsule on applesauce, do not chew or crush contents
Amprenavir	Swallow capsule whole, available in solution (containing propylene glycol) +++
Anastrozole	With a glass of water, antineoplastic.
ASA – enteric coated form	With a glass of water Switch to chewable or regular tablet with no coating.
Atazanavir	Do not open capsule. Immunomodulator
Atomoxetine	Do not open capsule. Irritant +++
Attapulgate activated tablet regular strength	
Axitinib	Antineoplastic
Azatadine/pseudoephedrine	Slow release pseudoephedrine. Do not crush
Azathioprine	Food ↓ GI side effects. Antineoplastic, can compound 10mg/ml or 50mg/ml suspension.
Bellergal Spacetabs	Can cut, do not crush.
Bezafibrate – SR	Sustained release, full glass of water. Use regular release capsule instead (PMS bezafibrate) or switch to fenofibrate. (same family of drug)
Bicalutamide	Antineoplastic. With a glass of water
Bisacodyl	With a glass of water, do not take with milk. Enteric coated. Use suppository instead or lactulose. Active medication inactivated by gastric acid
Budesonide	Controlled ileal release. With a glass of water

Buprenorphine/Naloxone (suboxone)	Sublingual tablet
Bupropion-SR, XL	Sustained release, do not divide, take with water, food ↓ GI side effects, ↑ risk of seizure if crushed (dose > 150mg)
Busulfan	Antineoplastic, can halve tabs (do not contaminate hands or inhale the drug). Compound 2mg/5ml.
Calcium acetate (PhosLo)	
Calcitriol gel	Rocaltrol solution 1microgram/ml
Candesartan/hydrochlorothiazide	
Capecitabine	With glass of water, take with meal or 30 minutes after meal. Antineoplastic
Carbamazepine-CR	Controlled release. Use regular release tablets or chewable or suspension 100mg/5ml. Can be cut in two
Carter pills	Contains bisacodyl that is inactivated by gastric acidity
Carvedilol	With water, food ↓ rate of absorption and orthostatic effects
Cefuroxime	Bitter taste if chewed or crushed. Food ↑ absorption. With glass of water. Use oral suspension.
Cetirizine/pseudoephedrine	Pseudoephedrine is slow release
Chlorambucil	Do not divide tablets, antineoplastic. Can compound 2mg/ml suspension.
Chloroquine	Can be cut, bitter taste if chewed or crushed.
Chlorpromazine	
Cinacalcet	
Ciprofloxacin-tablets	Bitter taste. Use ciprofloxacin suspension, do not chew the microgranules.
Ciprofloxacin-liquid	Do not chew microgranules
Ciprofloxacin-XL	Sustained release (give liquid or regular tablets in 2 doses/day)
Citalopram	With a glass of water
Clarithromycin-XL tablet	Sustained release, food ↑ bioavailability. Use regular release or oral suspension and give in 2 doses per day.
Clodronate capsule	Swallow whole, oropharyngeal irritation if chewed or crushed.
Codeine Contin	Controlled release, all codeine contin strengths may be halved except 50mg. Use codeine regular release or syrup. Risk of overdose if crushed or chewed
Colestipol	Do not cut. With glass of water or any liquid
Conjugated estrogen/MPA	Modified release. Use topical preparation or patch
Cyclophosphamide	Antineoplastic, food ↓ GI side effects. Compound 5mg/ml elixir with powder for injection.
Cyclosporine	Swallow whole, immunosuppressant. Use oral solution.
Darifenacin	Sustained release
Darunavir	
Dasatinib (Sprycel)	Film coated – swallow whole
Deferasirox	30 minutes prior to first meal of day, do not swallow whole, completely disperse tablets by stirring in noncarbonated water, orange juice or apple juice only until fine suspension obtained. Disperse doses <1g in 100ml and doses >1g in 200ml (Do not chew)
Delavirdine	Can be dissolved in 90ml of water and drink immediately. Rinse glass and drink content.
Desipramine	Do not cut, bad taste

Desmopressin - MELT	Melts once placed on tongue
Desvenlataxine (Pristiq)	Swallow whole
Dextroamphetamine spansules	Can open capsules & mix with applesauce but do not crush beads.
Diclofenac-EC, SR	Enteric coated or slow release, food ↓ GI side effects, with water or milk. Use suppositories or other NSAID
Diclofenac regular dosage	Local irritation if chewed or crushed. Use suppositories or other NSAID
Diclofenac/misoprostol	The center of the pill contains enterosoluble diclofenac (irritant)
Didanosine-EC	At least 30 minutes before meals or 2 hours after meals, non interchangeable with chewable Videx
Diethylpropion-CR	
Diflunisal	Food ↓ GI side effects, with water or milk, irritant
Diltiazem – tablets	60mg is scored, do not chew or crush. Can compound a 12mg/ml suspension or use capsule that can be opened but do not crush beads.
Diltiazem-SR, CD, ER	Regular dosage should not be crushed, capsules can be opened but beads should not be crushed
Diltiazem-XC	Once daily at bedtime, should not be crushed
Dipyridamole/ASA (Aggrenox)	Extended release pellets. Capsule can be opened but do not crush beads (dipyridamole)
Disopyramide-LA	Can cut in ½. Compound 1mg/ml or 10mg/ml or capsule qid
Divalproex sodium-ER	Enterosoluble
Divalproex sodium-regular, EC	Food ↓ GI side effects, enterosoluble
Docusate sodium/calcium	Swallow whole, with glass of water, exist in syrup but need high quantity, could be replaced by lactulose..
Docusate calcium	Use oral drops or liquid
Donepezil – RDT (Aricept RDT)	Do not split, dissolves on the tongue.
Doxycycline	With a glass of water to avoid esophageal ulceration, food ↓ GI side effects. Irritant if chewed or crushed. Do not open capsule irritant +++
Doxylamine/pyridoxine	Slow release
Duloxetine	Do not open capsule. Do not crush beads
Dutasteride	Swallow whole (teratogenic potential)
Efavirenz	Swallow whole with water
Efavirenz/Emtricitabine/Tenofovir (Atripla)	Swallow whole with water
Eletriptan	Swallow whole with a glass of water
Eltravirine	
Entacapone	Do not cut or crush.
Erlotinib	Antineoplastic
Erythromycin-base (PCE)	If enteric coated, do not crush or chew Use capsule instead but do not crush beads.
Esomeprazole	May disperse in 120ml water, stir until disintegrated, drink the liquid with the pellets, pellets must not be crushed or chewed (inactivated by gastric acidity if crushed)
Estramustine	Swallow whole with glass of water. Antineoplastic
Ethosuximide	Use syrup. Use Zarontin syrup 250mg/5ml
Etidronate	Can cut, do not crush or chew. Irritant
Etoposide	Antineoplastic
Etravirine	Dispense in 100ml of cold water and drink immediately

Exemestane	Antineoplastic
Famciclovir	With a glass of water
Ferrous sulfate-SR	
Felodipine	With a glass of water slow release (do not crush). Use another medication in the same class, such as amlodipine.
Fexofenadine/pseudoephedrine (Allegra-D)	Swallow whole. Pseudoephedrine is long acting.
Finasteride	Teratogenic could be absorbed by skin and mouth if broken
Fludarabine	Antineoplastic
Flurbiprofen-SR	Swallow whole, with water or milk. Oropharyngeal irritant if crushed.
Flutamide	antineoplastic
Fluvastatin-XL/Fluvastatin	Swallow whole. Use fluvastatin 40mg twice a day
Fluvoxamine	With a glass of water. Can be cut. Crushing/chewing may cause local irritation.
Frovatriptan (Frova)	Swallow whole
Fucidin	Bad taste
Gabapentin-coated tablet	Use capsule or compound 100mg/ml.
Galantamine-ER	Preferably with morning meal. Can open capsule do not crush beads.
Ganciclovir	Food maximizes bioavailability, potentially carcinogenic, teratogenic.
Gefitinib	antineoplastic
Gemfibrozil – coated	Use a generic capsule, bad taste.
Gliclazide-MR	With a glass of cool water. Use regular release tablets 80mg and give in 2 doses/day.
Hydromorphone-Contin capsule	May sprinkle contents of capsule onto soft food but do not chew the beads Do not crush re: risk of overdose
Hydroxychloroquine	Intolerance if crushed (stomach) – probably cut.
Hydroxyurea	May empty contents of capsule into a glass of water and take immediately, do not allow powder onto hands and do not inhale. Antineoplastic.
Hydroxyzine	Use atarax syrup 10mg/5ml. Bad taste.
Hyoscine	Sugar coated. Photosensitive.
Ibuprofen –gelcaps	Terrible taste. Use suspension or chewable tablets.
Imatinib	Can be cut in ½. Antineoplastic can be dissolved in mineral oil or apple juice to mask taste.
Imipramine	Bad taste
Indinavir	Do not cut, capsule can be opened and contents mixed with fruit puree. (taste can be bad)
Indomethacin	Food ↓ GI irritation, with water or milk Use suppository or open capsule.
Iron salts-capsules/tablets	Food, especially dairy products, coffee and tea, decreases absorption and GI side effects
Isosorbide dinitrate-SL	Do not eat or drink while tablet dissolving
Isosorbide dinitrate-SR	Slow release
Isosorbide-5 mononitrate (Imdur)	With a glass of water, may break tablet in half along scored line. Do not crush.
Isotretinoin	Food increases bioavailability. Mucous membrane irritant. The 10mg capsules are much smaller than the 40mg capsules.

Itraconazole-capsules	Swallow whole with cola beverage if on acid secretion suppressor. Not interchangeable with sporanox oral solution. Can open capsule but do not crush beads.
Ketoprofen-EC, SR	With a glass of water. Use ketoprofen capsule or suppository.
Lactase-caplets	
Lactobacillus acidophilus compound	Absorption can be compromised
Lamivudine-tablets	Immunomodulator
Lamivudine/zidovudine	Immunomodulator
Lansoprazole-capsules, delayed release	With water, swallow whole. Delayed-release capsules can be opened and the intact granules can be sprinkled on a tablespoon of applesauce and swallowed immediately, granules can also be mixed in juice for NG administration (stable for 30 min). Do not crush or chew granules
Lansoprazole-tablets, delayed release (Fast Tab)	Do not crush, place tablet on tongue and swallow when all disintegrated, do not chew granules
Leflunomide	With a glass of water, immunomodulator (teratogen) swallow whole.
Letrozole	Antineoplastic
Levodopa/benserazide	Swallow whole, do not open or dissolve
Levodopa/carbidopa – CR	200/50 strength may be halved, do not crush. Compound Levodopa 5mg/ml + carbidopa 1.25mg/ml or use regular tablets and reduce tablet dose by 25-30%
Levodopa/carbidopa/entacapone	Do not crush
Levofloxacin	Do not chew, bad taste. Can compound 50mg/ml.
Lithium salts-SR (Duralith)	Tablet may be broken in half. Use carbolith capsules instead (or equivalent). Can use syrup instead. (PMS)
Lomustine	Antineoplastic.
Loperamide – rapid dissolve	Let dissolve on the tongue
Lopinavir/ritonavir-tablets (Kaletra)	Use solution instead.
Lorazepam S/L tablet	Use regular tablet or let S/L tablet dissolve on tongue
Losartan	Hard to cut in ½, bitter taste. +++
Loratadine/pseudoephedrine	Swallow whole. Use syrup instead or 60mg tablets. Pseudoephedrine slow release
Lumivacoxib	Do not chew. May be possible to cut
Maraviroc	
Mefloquine	Can be cut, bitter and stings.
Melphalan	Antineoplastic. Precaution for cytotoxic medications.
Mercaptopurine	Compound 5mg/ml or 50mg/ml. Antineoplastic. Tablet can be cut.
Mesalamine	Acid will destroy
Metformin-ER (Glumetza)	Slow release must be taken with food, optimizes absorption and ensures complete release of metformin. Use regular tablets instead and give in 2 doses/day
Methotrexate	Compound 2.5mg/ml. Antineoplastic
Methotrimeprazine	Active ingredient very photosensitive.
Methylphenidate-SR (Concerta) ER/CR	Use regular release or biphentin capsule can be opened but do not crush beads
Metoprolol-SR	Can be cut in ½. Use regular release tabs.
Metronidazole-ER	Food increases rate of absorption. Use regular tablets or capsule.

Miglustat	Swallow whole Teratogenic
Mirtazapine-tablets	With a glass of water. Bad taste if crushed, can be cut.
Mirtazapine - RD	Let dissolve on the tongue. Do not crush or cut
Misoprostol (cytotec)	Combination of active ingredients
Mitotane	Can cut, be cautious, antineoplastic.
Montelukast sodium-granules	May mix granules with a spoonful of cold or room temperature food, do not chew granules
Morphine-SR	Only 200mg SR tablets may be halved along scored line, may open M-Eslon capsule and sprinkle contents onto soft food, do not chew or crush pellets. Risk of overdose if crushed.
Moxifloxacin	With a glass of water. Do not chew because of bad taste, can divide.
Mycophenolate-capsules, tablets	Swallow whole. Use suspension. Immunodulator (carcinogenic potential)
Nabumetone	With a glass of water or milk, food ↓ GI side effects
Naproxen-SR, EC, E	With a glass of water or milk. Use oral suspension or suppository.
Naratriptan	With a glass of water
Niacin-ER (Niaspan)	Swallow whole, non interchangeable with regular niacin.
Niacin/lovastatin – SR (Advicor)	Long acting niacin, short acting Lovastatin
Nifedipine-XL, PA	Do not divide, exchange resin, high risk of hypotension if crushed. Use Amlodipine tablet instead (can compound Amlodipine 1mg/ml suspension)
Nilotnib	Swallow whole
Nilutamide	Antiandrogen
Nimodipine	Contents may be aspirated into syringe, emptied into NG tube and washed down with 30ml normal saline
Nitrofurantoin capsule (Macrobid capsule)	Food ↑ bioavailability and ↓ GI side effects Use regular tablet or compound 10mg/ml. Do not open capsule.
Nitroglycerin-SL tablet	Do not crush, chew or swallow. Let dissolve under the tongue.
Norfloxacin	Can be cut, bad taste.
Ofloxacin	With a glass of water
Olanzapine-tablet	With a glass of water, very photosensitive. Use Zydis.
Olanzapine-zydis	May stir into 125ml water, milk, coffee, orange juice or apple juice, consume immediately, do not chew or crush. Let it dissolve on the tongue.
Olsalazine	Food ↓ GI side effects (opaque hard gelatin capsule)
Omeprazole-capsules	Swallow whole. Can open capsule. Do not crush beads, inactivated by gastric acidity
Omeprazole-MUPs tablets	Swallow whole. Can be dissolved in water Use capsule or compound 2mg/ml.
Omeprazole-tablets	With a glass of water. Use capsule or compound 2mg/ml. Inactivated by gastric acidity if crushed
Ondansetron - ODT	Let it dissolve on the tongue
Orphenadrine	Slow release
Orlistat	Not long acting (sensitive to humidity)
Oxprenolol-SR	Swallow whole
Oxybutynin-XL	With a glass of water. Use regular release oxybutynin and give in 2 doses/day.

Oxycodone-SR (Oxycontin)	Use immediate release oxycodone. Crushing oxycontin can cause overdose.
Oxtriphylline	
Paliperidone	Slow release (extended release)
Pancreatic enzymes-capsules with EC granules (Pancrelipase)	Swallow whole with water, may open capsule and sprinkle onto soft food, do not chew granules, take immediately after sprinkling
Pantoprazole	Destruction of medication by stomach acid. Compound 2mg/ml or use prevacid fast-tab or omeprazole capsule. Do not crush beads.
Paroxetine-regular	Bad taste, with a glass of water
Paroxetine-CR	Controlled release. Use regular paroxetine.
Pentoxifylline SR	Swallow whole. Compound 20mg/ml suspension
Phenazopyridine	May discolor teeth if chewed or crushed
Phentermine	Cation exchange resin
Phenytoin	Not with an enteral feeding preparation, capsule can be opened but do not crush beads. Use chewable tablets or suspension (dosage adjustment needed).
Phoslo tab	Dissolved in specific area of digestive tract
Phosphate effervescent tab	Let dissolve in water
Pilocarpine	Do not chew, crush or cut.
Pinaverium	Irritation ++
Piroxicam caps	Mucous membrane irritation. Use suppository
Potassium salts-SR capsules	Swallow whole, may sprinkle contents of capsule onto soft food and swallow without chewing
Potassium salts-SR tablets (K-dur)	May break tablet in half, may also disintegrate tablet in half glass of water, stir and swallow immediately. Do not crush beads.
Praziquantel	Tablet may be halved, do not chew. Very bitter taste causes N/V.
Prazosin	Cut in ½, bad taste.
Premarin	Modified release. Use topical formulations or estrace.
Procainamide-SR	Compound 50mg/ml. tablets of 500mg and 750mg can be cut.
Procarbazine capsule	Capsules should not be opened Antineoplastic
Promethazine	
Propranolol-LA caps	Capsule can be opened but do not crush beads
Pseudoephedrine 120mg (Eltor)	Slow release, use pseudoephedrine 60mg or syrup 30mg/5ml instead
Psyllium-granules	With a glass of water
Pyridostigmine-regular	Tablets may be cut in half, chewing or crushing may increase side effects. Hygroscopic (sensitive to humidity)
Pyridostigmine-SR (mestinon)	Can be cut in ½. (matrix) Do not crush. Sensitive to humidity.
Quetiapine XR	Use regular quetiapine and give in 2 doses.
Quinidine salts-CR	May be cut in half
Quinine	
Rabeprazole	Enteric coated, swallow whole (stomach acidity will destroy medication). Use prevacid fast-tab or omeprazole capsule or prevacid capsule. Do not crush beads.
Raloxifene	Teratogenic potential, taste may be hard to accept.
Raltegravir (sentress)	antiretroviral
Ramipril/hydrochlorothiazide (Altace HCT)	Can divide, do not crush. Use ramipril and hydrochlorothiazide separately if need to crush.

Retinoic acid/tretinoin gel	Teratogenic. Pregnant women should not open capsule
Risedronate	With a glass of water, swallow whole. Only to prevent oropharyngeal ulceration, Use Alendronate solution 70 mg/ml (not covered by ODB April 2008)
Risperidone M-tab (oral disintegrating)	Do not split in halves. Use oral solution. Let dissolve on the tongue
Rivaroxaban (xarelto)	Swallow whole
Rivastigmine	Use oral solution instead 10mg/5ml.
Rizatriptan - RPD	Let dissolve on the tongue
Ropinirole	Food ↓ GI side effects, with water. Very photosensitive. Bad taste.
Saquinavir mesylate	Swallow whole. Can compound 50mg/ml suspension.
Sevelamer	Swallow whole, do not break into pieces. Compound 50mg/ml Sensitive to humidity.
Sibutramine	Swallow whole
Sildenafil (Viagra)	Swallow whole
Sodium fluoride	
Sodium fusidate	Bad taste
Sorafenib	Antineoplastic
Spironolactone	Bitter taste if crushed. 100mg scored. Suspension can be compounded 25mg/ml.
Spironolactone/hydrochlorothiazide (Aldactazide)	Bitter taste if crushed. 50mg scored. Suspension can be compounded, spironolactone 5mg/ml and hydrochlorothiazide 5mg/ml.
Sterculia gum	With a glass of water
Sulfasalazine-EC	With a glass of water, enteric coated. Regular tablets not used for same indication.
Sulfasalazine-regular	With a glass of water, food ↓ GI side effects
Sumatriptan	Bad taste if crushed or chewed
Sumatriptan - DF	Use nasal spray instead, or compound 5mg/ml suspension. Do not crush.
Sunitinib	Antineoplastic
Tacrolimus	Compound 0,5mg/ml. Immunosuppressant
Tamoxifen	Antineoplastic
Tamsulosin-CR tablet/capsule	Controlled release tablet should not be crushed. Available in capsule that can be opened but do not crush beads.
Telithromycin	Bitter taste if crushed or chewed
Temozolomide	Swallow whole, do not open capsules (antineoplastic)
Testosterone (Andriol) gel caps	Do not crush or chew. Use androgel or androderm.
Testosterone undecanoate	
Tetracycline	Compound 25mg/ml. Can stain teeth, swallow whole.
Theophylline-SR tablets (except Uniphyll)	With a glass of water. Use syrup and adjust frequency of administration..
Theophylline-Uniphyll	With or shortly after evening meal, tablets may be halved. Use syrup and adjust frequency of administration (Theolair)
Thioguanine	Compound 20mg/ml suspension. Antineoplastic
Thyphoid vaccine-capsules	Swallow whole
Tiaprofenic acid-SR	Swallow whole
Tolterodine-LA capsule	Capsule can be opened but do not crush beads

Topiramate-capsules	Swallow whole, may sprinkle contents onto soft food, swallow without chewing
Topiramate-tablets	With a glass of water. Use capsule and open it but do not crush beads or compound 6mg/ml suspension.
Tramadol-XL	Swallow whole. Crush or chew tablet can cause overdose.
Trandolapril/verapamil (Tarka)	Slow release. Trandolapril is immediate release, verapamil is slow release. Mavik capsule and Isoptin SR tablet can replace it.
Trazodone	Can cut, do not chew, bad taste. Can compound trazodone 10mg/ml.
Valganciclovir	Food increases bioavailability. Compound 90mg/ml suspension. Teratogenic
Valproic acid	Swallow whole with glass of water, minimize local irritation of mouth and throat. Use syrup instead (Depakene syrup 250mg/ml)
Venlafaxine-XR	With a glass of water. Can open capsules and sprinkle on soft food. Do not crush beads.
Verapamil (Covera-HS)	Do not split tablets, designed to deliver peak level in the morning (given at bedtime). Use other verapamil formulations.
Verapamil-SR (except Covera-HS)	Tablets of 180mg and 240mg are scored tablets and may be halved. Can compound 50mg/ml suspension.
Vitalux, Vitalux-S, Vitalux AREDS	Long acting
Vitamin C (Redoxon)	Effervescent tablet. Let dissolve in water and drink.
Vitamin E	Swallow whole
Ziprasidone (Geodon)	Swallow whole
Zolmitriptan - rapimelt	Let it dissolve on the tongue.