

Lama Blessing Pills

By Kathy Wesley. Last revised 7.26.05

Recently, some of the KTC sangha members have asked me for instructions on how to use and take lama blessing pills. Over the years, various lamas have visited the Columbus Karma Thegsum Choling, and some of them have handed out pills of various types. People are curious about what the pills contain, and how they should be properly stored and used.

As for the contents, it's hard to say; some pills contain blessed herbs (particularly the preparation called "men drup" or "dharma medicine" or "lama medicine"). Other pills are merely ground barley flour mixed with liquid (such as saffron water, plain water, or other blessed liquids). All have been blessed in special ceremonies.

Whatever the contents, the intent of the pills are the same: they serve to offer the recipient a blessing from a lama, which can be helpful to one's body or mind. You can take them when you are ill, or feeling distressed, or having obstacles in your life. You also can give them to others, or drop them in bodies of water to bless the beings living in the water, etc. Receiving the blessing of a lama—even "long-distance," through taking a blessing pill—can be very valuable and important in times of trouble.

Some pills have specific shapes and purposes, such as long life (largish red pills), and special blessing pills from His Holiness Karmapa (tiny black pills), but all pills carry the same function—to convey a blessing.

Storage of the pills is simple: leave them in a container on your shrine, on the level of your pictures and statues of enlightened beings.

Here's a short essay I wrote on the taking of lama pills:

Taking Lama Blessing Pills

By Kathy Wesley, after Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche.
Last revised 4.26.05

Here are some directions for taking lama blessing pills:

1. Put the pill in a full glass of water. Wait a bit. Then drink down the water and the partially-softened pill. (Alternately, the pill can just be taken with water like Western medicine pills.)
2. If you have more than one blessing pill, you can put one in a jar of water and keep the jar in your refrigerator. Pour some of the water in a glass each day and drink the water. Then add more water to the jar. Continue doing this until the water needs a complete change. At that time, pour the remaining water and the pill in a body of water (such as the sea, or a lake or stream) to bless the wildlife.
3. My addition to these directions: Think, as you take the pill or drink the water, that you receive the blessing of the enlightened ones. Dedicate the merit to all sentient beings.

Hope this is helpful. May all beings benefit from the dharma activity of the lamas!

