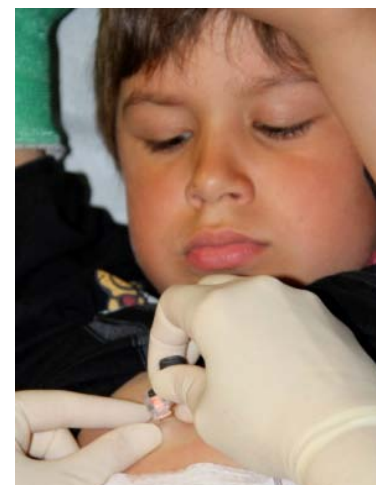


Ways You Can Help Children Cope During Treatments and Procedures

What can you do?

- Take time to help a child understand what will happen and why.
- After you explain what is going to happen, ask the child to explain these steps back to you.
- Offer as many realistic choices as possible.
“Do you want to sit in your mom’s lap or lie down on the bed for this procedure?”
- Suggest simple coping strategies the child & family can practice and try ahead of time:
Listening to music on an iPod, blowing bubbles, deep breathing...
- Be a role model. Stay calm throughout the process. Remind the child that she or he can get through this with your support.
“Remember what we practiced..” or “You are trying so hard to hold still”.
- Acknowledge the feelings of the child especially when the event is challenging.
“It’s okay to be scared and cry, but keep trying to hold still”.



How to use praise & rewards:

Praise and rewards:

- must be sincere, specific, earned and truthful:
*“You were able to stay calm throughout the whole CT scan” **instead of** “You are the best at staying calm of any patient ever I’ve ever seen for a CT scan!”*
- should provide information or feedback, *not* used in a controlling way to get what you want:
*“Blowing bubbles is helping you get through this blood work” **instead of** “If you blew bubbles all the time, it would be a lot easier to get your blood work done!”*
- should focus on the effort the child puts in, not on her or his ability or intelligence:
*“You used the way you practiced to swallow all of your medicine!” **instead of** “You’re so smart for swallowing all of your medicine!”*

Your warmth and caring help children cope and master difficult treatments and procedures.