



HELPING YOUR CHILD ACHIEVE A SUCCESSFUL BLOOD DRAW

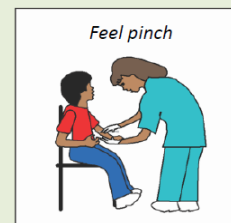
HIGHLIGHTS:

- TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR MEDICAL EXPERIENCE
- DIFFERENT COPING STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED DURING A BLOOD DRAW
- SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD THROUGH A BLOOD DRAW.

Prior to your appointment:

- Gather information from your health care provider about the procedure or event.
- Use honest, developmentally appropriate explanations (example are listed in Table 1.) to help your child understand the experience.
- Incorporate visual supports or toys to help prepare your child.
- What are your child’s best coping strategies? Different coping strategies include the use of distraction, using a transitional object from home, going over a social story various times before the event, or using a visual support guide.
- Communicate your coping strategies with your health care staff so those support services can be used during your child’s blood draw.

FIRST



THEN



First-Then Visual Schedule can be used to help children understand the experience.

- Try using accurate information and avoid that “white lie”.
- Explain what is happening during the procedure using clear, direct language. Your health care providers may assist you in this.
- When possible, provide choices to increase your child’s sense of control. Ask your child to pick out which coping techniques that would like to use (blow bubbles or look at a movie) to stay calm.
- Provide positive comments and praise to your child for completing the procedure.

SOCIAL STORIES™

- You may use a Social Story™ to help prepare your child for their medical experience.
 - Many people use Social Stories™ to help explain situations that may be new, scary, or confusing.
 - A Social Story™ can help your child understand the experience. This may decrease their stress and anxiety regarding a new experience.
- An example of a Social Story™ can be found on our website....*
- <http://www.johnson-center.org/downloads/pdfs/blood-draw.pdf>



A positive medical visit lays the foundation for the child's future medical experiences.

PROCEDURAL SUPPORT: DISTRACTION

- Favorite Toys

Encourage your child to bring their favorite toy or object into the procedure room. This transitional object can help your child feel a sense of comfort and decrease their anxiety.

- Activities

Encourage your child to participate in an activity during the procedure. They can read a book, watch a movie or video, or sing a song.

- Distraction Supplies can include:

- Bubbles
- Sensory objects (cold pack, vibrating toy)
- Pin Wheels
- Colorful toys
- Squeeze balls

Distraction may help your child focus on positive experiences rather than focus on the procedure. By taking your child's mind off of the procedure, you can decrease their stress or anxiety regarding the experience. Later, when you use these strategies, your child may associate it with a positive experience and be more relaxed and confident.

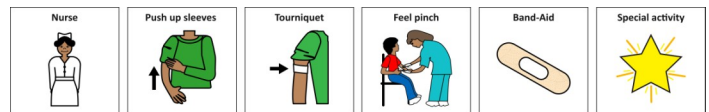


PROCEDURAL SUPPORT: VISUAL SUPPORTS

A visual schedule can help your child understand the steps of the medical experience. You can go over your visual schedule at home before the procedure and again while waiting for your appointment. This helps your child become comfortable with the steps of the medical experience.

You can create your own visual schedule by:

- Using a photograph, picture, or object to communicate to your child.
- You can use a First-Then board to depict the procedure
- You can also use a visual schedule of the entire event.



PROCEDURAL SUPPORT: COMFORT POSITIONING

"It makes me feel better when I know mommy is holding me."



Positioning for comfort is a comfort measure used to introduce comfort and control to patients during medical procedures, such as a blood draw.

Ask your health care provider about different positions that may help your child feel more comfortable.

Typically, caregivers are asked to "hold" their child in different positions that will not only increase coping, but increase the safety of you, your child, and your health care provider. It is important to remember to talk to your child about the nurse or health care team member "holding" in order to increase comfort level.

PROCEDURAL SUPPORT: RELAXATION



- **Guided Imagery:** During the procedure you can help your child visualize a more pleasant experience. You can talk about different sounds, smells, pictures, or places to distract your child from the medical procedure.
- **Deep breathing:** When your child is tense or anxious, their veins can become smaller and harder to find. Long, deep breaths can help your child relax. You can ask your child to imagine blowing up a balloon or counting their breaths.
- **Muscle relaxation:** You can help your child focus on relaxing different parts of their body.

Notes on relaxation:

It is best to try to practice relaxation techniques before the medical appointment.

Being proactive: It is best to use these strategies when your child is calm, instead of trying to use the strategy after your child is emotionally upset.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM

The Johnson Center provides family centered care to all patients and families. Communication and patient rapport is very important to us. You can help increase your child's positive medical experience by:

- Communicating your child's coping skills to your health care team.
- Problem solving different coping techniques with your Child Life Specialist.
- Speaking with your health care provider about medical concerns regarding the blood draw.



JOHNSON CENTER
FOR CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

For more information regarding patient care contact our Child Life Specialist, Jeanna Martinez at

jmartinez@johnson-center.org

We all play an important role in the child's health care experience. Any comfort measures implemented benefit the child today and more importantly, tomorrow.

TABLE 1. APPROPRIATE EXPLANATIONS

It's What You Say and How you Say it:

<p>Applying the Elastic (Tourniquet):</p> <p>"This part feels like a squeeze. It helps the nurse find the best spot."</p>	<p>Cleaning with a Wipe:</p> <p>"We use a wipe to clean the spot. It may smell funny and can be cold and wet."</p>	<p>The Blood Draw</p> <p>"We are going to use a small straw to help the needle find the blood. Once we have found the right spot, the blood will come through the straw and then the needle will come out. Some kids say the needle feels like a small poke, but looking at a book or movie really helps."</p>
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