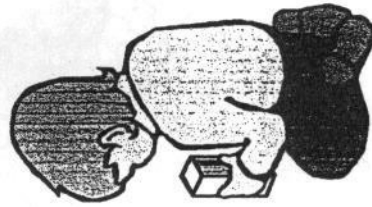


When going to the doctor's office, children do best with a little bit of preparation. Simple information about what will happen and what it will feel like is most helpful. Encourage your child to ask questions and express feelings about the visit.



- If your child is to have a shot or needle of any type, preparation with dolls, puppets, or drawings might be helpful.
- Very young children particularly like bubbles and pinwheels.
- Cuddling, rocking, singing, and soft talking provide comfort for babies and young children.
- Giving your child some control will also be of benefit. For example, allow your child to choose where to sit or which arm or leg to have the shot, can help him feel in control.

- Use of distraction with books, games, TV, or music can help keep your child's mind off the procedure or pain.
- Children can use their imaginations, suggestions, and deep breathing to help them feel relaxed and calm during their visit.
- For children of all ages, cold application and massage might be helpful.
- A cream called EMLA can sometimes be used to numb the skin and make needles less painful. Your doctor or nurse practitioner can prescribe this cream. Apply it 90 minutes before your child's blood draw or shot. Refer to the instructions by your child's doctor or nurse.

When you are at the doctor's office, ask your child's nurse for comforting materials and additional information and assistance.