

## Supporting your child during a medical procedure

### On the day of the procedure

Research shows that children and young people's experiences of procedural pain can affect their pain tolerance throughout their life, impacting future health interventions. You can discuss options to support pain with your Doctor or Pharmacist. Topical anaesthetic cream available at pharmacies can be applied before a blood test to numb the area.

### During the procedure

Inform the clinician of the plan you have created for coping and discuss how you prefer your child to be positioned, for example, sitting on your lap, in a koala hug, or on a chair.

- Settle child into your chosen position.
- Start using your chosen distraction or calm breathing.
- If your child likes to be aware of the steps, continue to explain what is happening: "Next, they need to clean your arm. It might feel cold". If you are unsure of the steps, ask the clinician to do this for you.
- Focus your child as much as possible on the chosen distraction or breathing strategy. Remind them of their job and praise them for specific tasks "It's okay to cry, you are doing a great job keeping your arm still".
- Validate any feelings your child expresses: "you are feeling worried right now. I am right here with you".

Some children need to look at what is happening to feel in control and to make sense of the experience. This should be supported unless it is causing increased distress.

### After the procedure

Give specific praise to your child for things they did well during the procedure: "I really liked the way you kept your arm so still". This can promote a sense of achievement.

Stay with your child until they are calm. Your baby or infant may like a cuddle or a feed.

Talk to your child about the things they did that were helpful and continue to validate any feelings expressed.

Write down or film a video talking about what went well as a reminder for future interventions.