

Comfort Promise

Making Needle Procedures More Comfortable



Comfort Promise is a 5-step plan to help children and teens:

- Have a sense of control.
- Be a part of their own care.
- Cope with future health care events.
- Have a better overall experience.



1. Numb the Skin

Lidocaine cream numbs the skin so your child will feel the poke less. Lidocaine cream:

- Can be used on full term newborns to adults.
- Works best when you put on your child's skin 30-60 minutes before the needle procedure.
- Can be put on at home before your child's appointment, or you can ask for it before the procedure.
- Does not need a prescription.

Scan the QR code to the right to learn:

- Where to get 4% lidocaine cream
- How to put it on your child
- Important safety information



2. Comfort Positions

- Letting children sit up during a procedure comforts them and gives them a sense of control.
- You or a staff member can hold your child during the procedure.
- Helps your child be comforted while staying still and safe.
- Babies can be swaddled and held.

3. Distraction

You can distract your child by helping them focus on something other than the procedure. Some ideas:

- Help your child look at books, rattles, toys, a phone or tablet.
- Play counting games or "I Spy."
- Sing or listen to music.
- Help your child take deep breaths.

Ask a Children's Mercy staff member about other distraction options such as:



Buzzy®



Shot Blocker®



Cold Spray

4. Sucrose (sugar water)

- Sucrose can help lower pain for babies from birth to 18 months old.
- Give sucrose 2-3 minutes before the procedure. You can keep giving it during the procedure.
- You can give sucrose with a pacifier, syringe, or a clean finger.

Or Breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding during a needle procedure can help your baby feel less pain.
- You should start breastfeeding 2-5 minutes before a procedure and continue during the procedure.
- If your child unlatches, gently reposition and continue when your baby is ready.

5. Memory After a Needle Poke

What you say after a needle poke helps shape your child's memory of the experience. Use kind, simple words to help your child remember what went well.

Tips for Talking with Your Child

» Talk about what went well.

- "You held your arm so still!"
- "You took nice, deep breaths."
- "The nurse was kind and helped you."
- "The poke was finished quickly."

» Help your child remember what really happened.

- "Yes, you cried. It was only for a short time and then we went to the park."

» Remind your child they were brave and talk about what helped.

- "You were so brave. I'm proud of you!"
- "You used your toy to help you during the poke."

Other Tips

- Be honest. Tell your child about a vaccine, blood draw or other needle procedure ahead of time.
- Focus on coping, not the pain. Talk about how your child will sit and what can help distract them during the procedure.
- Make sure your child eats and drinks, unless they have been given directions not to eat or drink.
- Have your child wear a short-sleeved shirt.
- If your child has fainted before or feels dizzy with needle procedures, have them sit and squeeze their knees together several times before the poke. This may help them not faint.

Learn more about Comfort Promise



Your voice matters. Learn how patients and families help improve care. Visit [childrensmercy.org](https://www.childrensmercy.org) and search "Patient Experience."

