

Easing your child's pain



At times, your child may have pain during their hospital stay. At Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, you can work with the care team to help your child understand and better manage their pain. As a parent or caregiver, YOU play a very important role in helping your child cope with pain.


What can I do to help my child?

Here are some tips to help ease your child's pain:

Tell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the care team what has or has not helped in the past.• Tell your child it is not their fault that they are going through something painful.
Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use simple words to prepare your child. Tell them what is going to happen.• It can help your child better manage their pain when they know to expect something that may cause discomfort.
Be honest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid making promises you cannot keep, such as, "I promise it will not hurt."• Children need honest information to build and maintain trust in you and others.• Provide information about why procedures are being done and what to expect.
Offer choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give your child a sense of control by offering choices before and/or during procedures.• You could ask, "Would you like to count or take some deep breaths when it is time to get up?"
Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold your child's hand during procedures.• Hold your child in a comforting position if possible. For example, let your child sit on your lap or give you a hug during a procedure.
Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment on your child's positive behaviors, such as "You did such a good job holding still," or "I like the way you let us know how that felt."• When giving praise, avoid saying "good boy" or "good girl."
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell your child it is OK to cry or feel mad.• Sometimes, crying or showing other emotions is what a child needs to do to get through painful events.
Be aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try to remain calm and be aware of your feelings. If you are upset, your child may become more fearful.• Speak slowly, using a soft and calm tone.• Let your child's care team know if you feel too overwhelmed to directly support your child during a procedure.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Easing your child’s pain, continued

Offer coping ideas for your child	<p>Talk with your child about different ways to help them get through painful experiences, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breathing with slow, deep breaths or using bubbles to “blow away the pain.”• Squeezing someone’s hand or a stress ball when feeling pain.• Looking at something they enjoy (such as TV, a book or a magic wand).• Imagining their favorite place or doing something they like.• Listening to their favorite music or singing.• Using heat or ice packs to ease pain and discomfort• Using distraction, such as having friends or family visit, playing card or board games, watching a movie or show, or moving around the hospital when approved by your care team. This can help distract your child from pain and discomfort.• Talking to the people around them about something they enjoy.• Visiting with pet therapy. Ask for a visit from one of our therapy dogs.• Repositioning into a more comfortable position or moving to a procedure room for approved procedures.• Gentle exercising, such as stretching throughout the day.• Using the Faces Pain Scale to help your child communicate the level of pain that they are experiencing. <p style="text-align: center;">Pain Scale</p> <div></div>
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What other resources are there?

Talk with our child life specialists about how they can help. You can also ask your doctor or nurse for other ways to help decrease your child’s pain.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child’s doctor or a member of your child’s healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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