



COMFORT FOR NEEDLE PROCEDURES

Health care procedures, especially when we use a needle, can be stressful for children and teens.

We want children to:

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

Things we can do to help children with needle procedures:

Sucrose (sugar water)

- Sucrose helps ease pain for babies who are newborn to 1 ½ years old.
- Babies should get sucrose 2-3 minutes before a procedure and throughout the procedure.
- Sucrose can be given on a pacifier, in a syringe or on a finger.

Breastfeeding

- When you breastfeed during a needle procedure, it helps your baby feel less pain.
- You should begin breastfeeding 2-5 minutes before a procedure and continue throughout the procedure.
- If your child unlatches, gently reposition and continue when your baby is ready.

Comfort Positions

- Letting children sit up during a procedure comforts them and gives them a sense of control.
- You, another caregiver or a staff member can hold your child during the procedure.
- This allows your child to be comforted while also helping them be still and safe during the procedure.
- Babies can be swaddled and held.

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®** and **cold spray**.



Numb the Skin

Lidocaine Cream (numbing cream)

Lidocaine cream numbs the skin so your child will feel less pain from needles.

Lidocaine cream:

- Can be used on full term newborns to adults.
- Should be put on your child 30-60 minutes before their needle procedure. This helps the cream to work best.
- Should be covered with something to help keep it in place. This can be Tegaderm™, Saran Wrap or Press and Seal®.
- Will be wiped off your child's skin before the needle procedure.
- Still works after it has been wiped off.

You can use lidocaine cream for needle pokes at:

- Home
- Doctor's appointments
- Blood draws



Here are some examples of products with 4% lidocaine cream:

Where can I get lidocaine cream?

You can get lidocaine cream at any Children's Mercy pharmacy or you can buy it at another pharmacy or store that sells medicine. You do not have to have a prescription for lidocaine cream.



Aspercreme®



Goldbond®



Equate (Walmart Brand)

To learn how to put lidocaine cream on your child, scan the QR codes or go to the links:



Applying Lidocaine to Children 0-5
<https://cmkc.link/lidocaine>



Applying Lidocaine to Children 5+
<https://cmkc.link/immunizations>



Applying Lidocaine for Lab Draw
<https://cmkc.link/lab-draw>

To learn more about safety guidelines for lidocaine cream, scan the QR codes or go to: cmkc.link/lidocaine-safety-info



Other Tips

- **Be honest.** Surprising children with a vaccination or other needle procedure(s) can make their anxiety about needle procedures much worse! Being honest gives you and your child time to prepare, plan and recover.
- **Don't focus on the pain.** Make plans that include how your child will sit and what might distract them best.
- **Make sure your child eats and drinks** (unless fasting).
- **Wear short sleeves.** If you think your child will pick at the cream wrap, have them wear a jacket to cover it up.
- **Squeeze your knees.** If you think your child might faint, help them practice squeezing their knees together several times while sitting. Then, have them do this just before the poke.

Learn more about the Comfort Promise



This material was developed in partnership with patients, families and Children's Mercy team members to improve the experience of healthcare and has earned the Patient and Family Seal of Collaboration. Learn more about the program and share your ideas with us.



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