

7. Check in with your child after the procedure

Talk to your child after their procedure. Asking your child about their experience can help them cope in the long term. It can also reduce their stress about future procedures.

Tell your child what they did really well. Then, you can ask your child:

- What made it easy?
- What could have made it easier?
- What can we do differently next time?

You can contact the Child Life Department and referrals can be made by filling out the request form located online and submitting it to ChildYouthTherapeuticServicesAdmin@cw.bc.ca

<http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/support-services/child-life>



MY COPING PLAN

You are getting a procedure done. This coping plan is a tool to help you prepare. Your plan will help guide your health care team.



During the procedure:

Do I want to close my eyes or look away...



Or do I want to watch the procedure?



I can choose a distraction I enjoy like:

Taking deep slow breaths

Playing a game on a phone or tablet

Using a fidget toy

Playing music 🎵❤️

Playing or talking with my caregiver

Something else

How do I want to be held by my caregiver?

1. Chest to chest in a bear hug

2. Sitting beside my caregiver

3. Being cuddled with my back against their chest

4. Something else

I want someone to prepare me for the procedure by telling me what will happen:

Yes No

Tell your health care provider if you would like to use numbing cream to block the signal during needle pokes.



Help Your Child Manage Medical & Surgical Procedures

Medical procedures can be stressful for your child – and for you



These suggestions can help you and your child manage stress before, during, and after their procedure.

Some children may need to talk about the procedure and their coping plan several times. Other children just need to prepare once.

You know your child best. Please adapt these suggestions to suit your child's age, interests, and personality.

This resource was co-developed by patient partners and health care professionals

1. Learn as much as you can about the medical procedure.

If you know what will happen, you will feel less stress. You will also be able to support your child.

First, talk to your child's health-care team. Ask questions, so that you understand what will happen. This will prepare you to speak with your child.

You can also ask:

- Where can I learn more?
- Can I be with my child during their procedure?

2. Encourage your child to tell you what they know about the procedure.

Ask your child, "What are you curious about?"

Sometimes children cannot explain what is bothering them. When your child is talking about their procedure, remember:

- Your child may not be able to explain why they feel stress.
- Validate your child's feelings and their concerns. (For example, "I know you are feeling worried right now. It's alright to feel worried.")

3. Talk to your child and be honest about what will happen.

When you explain the procedure in an honest way, you build trust.

You do not need to explain every detail to your child. Tell your child why they need this procedure. (For example, "This test will help the doctor understand why you're feeling this way.")

Reassure your child. Tell them how you will support them through the procedure. This can help reduce their stress.

When do I talk with my child about their procedure?

- It can be helpful for some older school aged children and youth to learn about their procedure weeks or months in advance.
- If your child is under six years, preparing them closer to the procedure date may be more supportive. If they are four or younger, prepare them within hours of the procedure.
- Preparing your child too far ahead could make them more stressed. They could also forget the information.

4. Make a coping plan with your child.

Children have different coping styles. Before the procedure, make a coping plan with your child. Invite them to come up with strategies that work best for them. Coping plans give your child some control over the day.

Some popular coping strategies are:

- Reading a book (or having a caregiver read out loud).
- Holding a favourite toy.
- Blowing bubbles.
- Playing with an iPad.
- Using a fidget toy.

Use the template on the back to create a coping plan with your child.

5. Share your child's coping plan with your health care team.

You can also let your health care team know what would help your child cope during the procedure.

For example, you could ask your health care team to:

- Consider your child's preferences.
- Support your child's unique needs.
- Promote your child's participation.

6. Offer choices when you can.

During hospital procedures, children do not have many choices. Allow your child to make decisions when you can. This can help your child feel more in control.

Depending on their procedure, these are some examples on how to provide your child with choices:

- What toy to bring to the hospital.
- To sit on your lap, or in a chair.
- To watch the procedure or look away