How Can Sucrose Help My Baby's Pain?

Information to Help You Make a Choice

Sucrose is a type of sugar. We know that sweet tasting solutions work to relieve pain in babies. It has been used for hundreds of years to help babies cope with mild to moderate pain.

We offer it to help your baby cope with pain during many different procedures. For example it helps with pain from:

- Pricking a heel or finger.

- Putting a tiny tube in a hand or foot to give fluids. This is called an IV or intravenous.

- Giving shots, also called immunizations.

- Checking eyes.

- Taking off tape.

- Taking out stitches.

- Changing bandages or dressings.

- Putting in tubes.

How does it work?

We put some sucrose on your baby's tongue. Your baby will want to suck and swallow it. It is the sucking as well as the sucrose that causes an area in your baby's brain to block feelings of pain.

Depending on the position your baby needs to be in for her or his care, your baby can suck on the breast, a soother, or a finger. Talk with your nurse which will work best for your baby and you.

How can you help?

- Comfort your baby by cuddling, stroking, or talking to him or her.

- Use toys, bubbles, or music to distract your baby.

- Talk about some of these ideas with the nurse before the procedure as well as what has worked before for your baby. The nurse can get some things to help you as well as call the child life therapist who may also be able to help.

Common questions:

Q: Will the sucrose cause my baby to have cavities?

A: No. The amount of sucrose is so small and in the mouth for such a short period of time that it will not cause cavities.

Q: Will the sucrose cause my baby to have high amounts of sugar in his or her blood?

A: No.

Q: If sucrose is used often with my baby will it stop working to relieve their pain?

A: No. Studies show that babies keep getting relief from pain even when it is used often.

Its good to ask!