

Helping your child cope

Children may get scared if they have to go to the emergency room. They may be upset about a visit to a clinic, laboratory or radiology departments. Here are some things you can do to help your child.



- **Keep your child informed.** Talk with your child about what to expect in a way your child will understand.
 - **Be understanding.** Let your child know it is okay to be scared or nervous.
 - **Be there.** Having a familiar person close by can be a huge help for a scared child.
 - **Praise.** Tell your child what they are doing well. Praise them when they wait patiently, hold still during an exam or procedure, talk about their feelings, etc.
- **Stay calm.** Your child may follow your example. If you are more relaxed your child may be less nervous.
 - **Be involved.** Try to distract your child during procedures in a calming way.
 - **Ask** if there is a Child Life Specialist who can help your child.

Ideas for distracting your child:

- **Infants.** Quietly sing a favorite song, talk to your baby in a gentle, rhythmic voice.
- **Young children.** Read or tell a favorite story, count quietly, sing a favorite song together.
- **School age.** Teach your child how to breathe deep to relax their body. Play “I Spy” or “Look and Find” in the room or read books.
- **Adolescents.** Teach your child how to breathe deep to relax their body. Imagine being in a favorite place, listen to music or watch a favorite show.



Remember: We are here to help you and your child. Please ask if you need some help!

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.