

Distraction techniques

Distraction can help reduce anxiety and pain in pediatric patients and their parents. They can also help pass the time while you are waiting. To be helpful, distractions need to be age appropriate and appealing to your child. Here are some ideas to calm and comfort your child.

Infant

- Holding or swaddling
- Patting or rubbing
- Music or singing
- Pacifier
- Oral sucrose
- Rattles and toys that make sounds



Toddler

- Music, singing, nursery rhymes
- Holding
- Bubbles
- Pinwheels
- Stuffed toys or blankets
- Light-up or motion toys
- Pop-up or sound books

Preschool

- Holding
- Music
- Cartoons
- Bubbles
- Pinwheels
- Pop-up or sound books
- Puppets
- Light-up or motion toys
- Saying the alphabet or counting
- Talking about favorite things (TV shows, pets, family toys)



School age

- Music
- Video games
- Guided imagery
- Focusing on breathing
- I Spy or Where's Waldo search games
- Talking about favorite things (TV shows, pets, family toys)
- Puzzles
- Brain teasers

Teens

- Music
- Video games
- Guided imagery
- Puzzles, Sudoku, crosswords
- Deep breathing



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