CHEO
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario
Centre hospitalier pour enfants de l'est de l'Ontario

The Top 10 Things To Do During a Procedure

1. **Create a connection first.** Introduce yourself, smile, tell a joke, or ask something about the child. Get down to the child's eye level. This helps you to build trust and develop a rapport with the patient.

2. **Explain why the procedure is needed:** "I need a small sample of your blood because it will act like a clue to help me find out why your stomach is hurting"). Use language appropriate for the child's age and developmental status

3. **Prepare the child for the procedure.** Discuss the sensory experiences involved and review the steps required to perform the procedure. "First, I will use the elastic. It's a big squeeze. Then, I will clean. That part feels cool. Finally, I will collect the sample of blood for the doctor to look at. That part can feel like a pinch but looking at a book or squeezing mom's hand really helps." When appropriate, allow the patient to see, touch, and play with medical equipment (i.e. gloves)

4. **Use positive rather than negative language**: "Now is the time I need you to hold your hand very still" rather than "Don't move!"

5. **Position the child in a comfortable manner** and they will be less distressed and more cooperative! Remember to keep the patient sitting up, on, or close to the parent, whenever possible and appropriate.

6. **Involve parents.** Be specific: "Mom, your job is to hold this hand and be a quiet calm voice for your child" or "Dad, you can hug right here and read the book while we are going to do this."

7. **Model appropriate behaviour:** "When I 'm feeling scared I take slow deep breaths and pretend to blow out birthday candles."

8. **Introduce a distraction item** (i.e. bubbles, books, toys, etc.) or a coping strategy (i.e. deep breathing, singing, imagery,) for the procedure. Ask the child, "Are you going to slowly count to 10 or are you going to take deep breaths while I put on your bandage?"

9. **Reward and encourage positive behaviour:** "Those are great deep breaths that you are taking. Keep it up!"

10. **Allow choice <u>when appropriate</u>:** "Which ear should I look in first?"

Contact the CHEO child life department for more information (613) 737-7600 (ext. 2322)