

HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH RADIOLOGY PROCEDURES AND EXAMS

- Medical procedures and exams can be stressful for children of all ages. This information sheet is available to provide strategies for helping you and your child prepare for, and cope with, their medical experience.

HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE:

- Research indicates that children who are prepared for a procedure or exam are less anxious than those children who are not prepared beforehand. You can help your child prepare by familiarizing yourself with the procedure or exam, and understanding what will happen before, during, and after. This way you can correctly prepare your child. To find more information on our Radiology exams and procedures, please visit the “Preparing your child” link on the Radiology department website.
- It is important to remember that if you are stressed or uncertain, your child will be too. If you are calm and confident, your child will be more relaxed.

TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR CHILD:

- If your child is under the age of 5, talk to them a day or two before their exam. If your child is older, talk to them about a week or so before. This will give them time to process and ask questions.
- Explain in words your child will understand, and be honest. Include what your child will see, hear, and feel during the procedure or exam.
- Encourage your child to discuss what they are feeling and to ask questions about the upcoming experience. This will help your child to feel understood and connected.
- IT IS OK TO NOT KNOW AN ANSWER TO YOUR CHILD'S QUESTION! Tell them you are not sure... do not make up an answer.



WE CAN HELP- CHILD LIFE IN RADIOLOGY:

- Child Life Specialists are trained in child development and are available to help prepare you and your child prior to their Radiology procedure or exam by using conversation, visuals, and sensory experience.
- If you'd like to speak to a Child Life Specialist about how to prepare your child, please call our Radiology Department at 858-966-5861 and ask for a Child Life Specialist.
- It is recommended to call a minimum of three business days before your child's procedure to ensure contact. Child Life hours are currently Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. so please call during this time.
- For more information on how Child Life Specialists can assist you and your child, please read the “Child Life in Radiology” link in the “Preparing your child” section of the Radiology website.



HELP YOUR CHLD COPE:

- It is not uncommon to see changes in your child's behavior before, during, or after an exam or procedure.
- Children will react differently depending on their age, exam or procedure, and past medical experiences.
- Your child will respond to your stress or anxiety, so try to remain calm, confident, and responsive to your child's needs.

TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE:

- Speak to them in a soft, comforting voice to help them remain calm, and redirect their attention to you.
- Give your child choices when you can. Let them decide which stuffed animal or toy to bring, and ask how you can make things easier for them.
- Remember that it is normal for your child to be anxious and even cry. Crying is a natural way for children to express their anxieties.
- Try to focus on the positive during the exam- For example- "You are doing a great job holding still" or "Thank you for telling us how you feel."
- You know your child best- tell staff what works or what doesn't work.
- Teach your child healthy coping techniques (deep breathing, distraction items, redirection). They will be more confident if they feel like they are participating and are in control of a part of their care.

ADDITIONAL INFO:

- This informational sheet is to provide basic knowledge on how to prepare yourself and your child for their Radiology exam.
- Please feel free to call our Radiology department to ask questions if needed. We as a hospital team are here to support both you and your child throughout your experience.

