



# I am going to the doctor.

[Cheek Swab]



# A note to caregivers:

This book will detail the steps of a cheek swab at Rady Children's Hospital.

This book was written for patients of different ages and language levels. In this story we refer to cheek swab test as “swab.” You can determine which language is best to use for your child.

Not all sections will apply to your child. Read this first and choose what information you think will be helpful. You know your child best.

Some children benefit from a reward after a cheek swab test. Please see the customizable visual on the last page of this story. This is one way to present the idea of a prize/reward to your child (e.g., “First swab, then [insert prize here]”).

If your child would benefit from distraction (e.g., light toy, youtube video) during the cheek swab test, please work with your doctor to determine what is appropriate to use. You may consider bringing a sensory/comfort item with you.

If your child is having difficulty remaining still, it can be helpful to count, sing a song, or use a timer for the duration they need to stay still. Your child may also benefit from practicing this at home.

We also recommend filling out the Autism Friendly Questionnaire in preparation of your visit. If you have trouble filling out the form in MyChart, then you may download a paper copy from our website and bring it with you to the appointment.

If you have more questions about strategies, please contact the Autism Friendly Health System Initiative at [autismfriendly@rchsd.org](mailto:autismfriendly@rchsd.org)

Sincerely,

**The RCHSD Autism Friendly Health System Initiative Team**





**I am going to the doctor.**

**First, I will talk to the doctor.**

**Then, they will do a test called  
a cheek swab.**

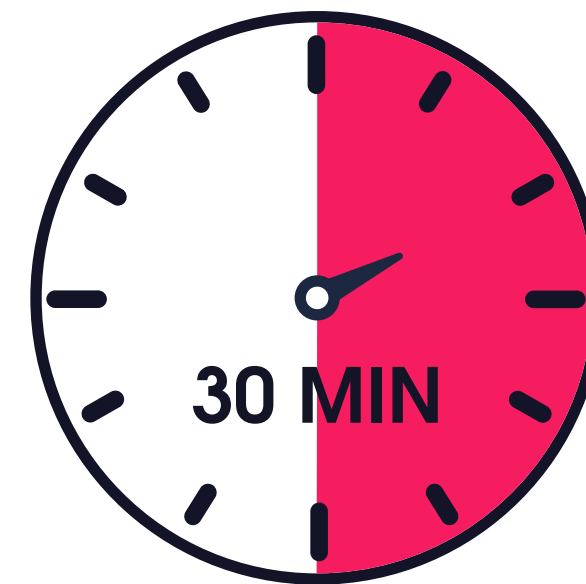
---





**I will not eat or drink for 30 minutes before my cheek swab.**

---





**First, we will park the car.**

**After we park the car, we will walk to the doctor's office.**

---



**I will check-in at the front desk.**





**Now I will wait until my name is called.**

**I can** *[insert preferred activity here]* **while I wait.**

---

Note to caregivers: We recommend bringing a toy or other activity for your child while they wait to be seen.





**When the doctor calls my name, I will walk to a new room with my [caregiver].**

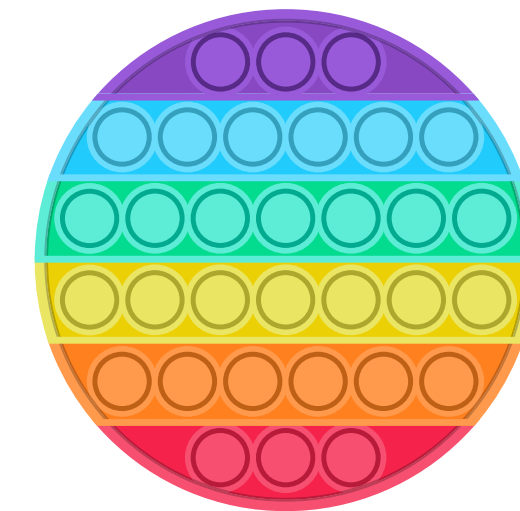
---



**It's ok to feel nervous.**



**If I am nervous, then I can hold my** *[insert item you brought with you for child to hold]*.



**My** *[caregiver]* **can stay with me the entire time.**

---

Note to caregivers: You may bring a sensory, comfort, or distraction item for your child to hold.

**First, my doctor will put the swab inside one side of my mouth.**

**Then, the doctor will rub it back and forth 10 times.**

**It will feel like a soft tickle in my cheek.**

---

x10





**Next, my doctor will move the swab to the other side of my mouth.**

**Then, the doctor will rub it back and forth 10 times.**

**It will feel like a soft tickle in my cheek.**

---



**I did a great job. I am all done.**

---

**all done**



# The End

---

*Note to caregivers: Please review the following pages for additional visuals that may be utilized to prepare for the visit.*







## Caregivers:

Here is a sample “**first-then**” visual if your child is earning a reward after a visit to the doctor. Please use the template on the next page and add your own picture of the reward your child is earning under the word, “**then.**”

You can present this by saying, “**First swab, then gummy bears.**”

---

FIRST	THEN
	



**FIRST**

**THEN**



**“First swab, then \_\_\_\_\_.”**



## Caregivers:

A **reward chart** can help the child understand how they will earn their **reward**. They can earn a star or check for completing each step of the visit.

This can increase motivation during the appointment.

Please customize with a picture of what your child is motivated to earn on the next page.

---

**I'm working for**



# I'm working for

□ □ □ □ □ □

= □





## Visual Schedules

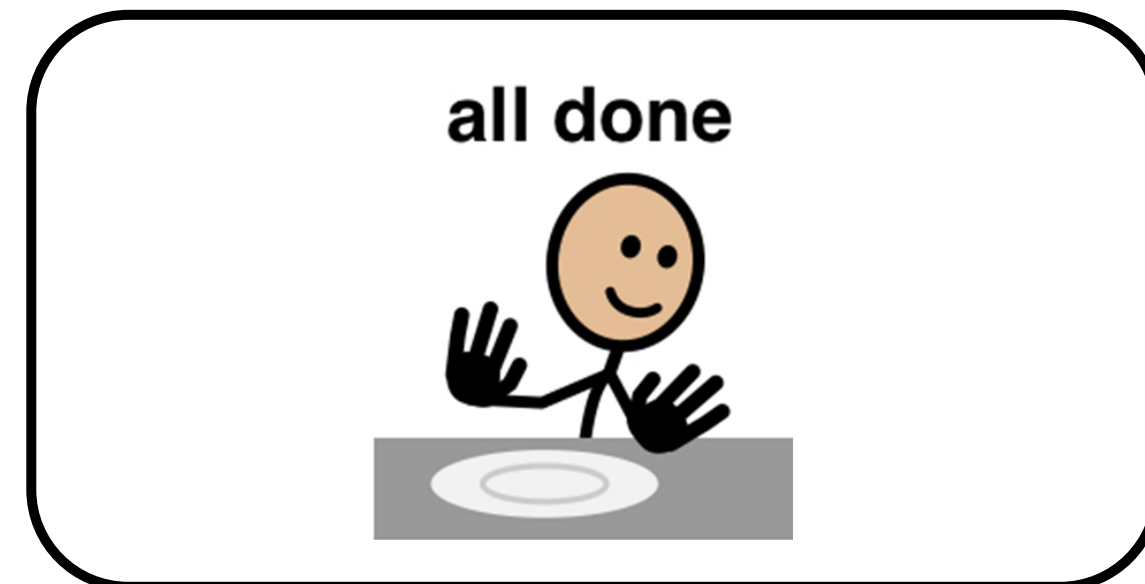
If your child benefits from the use of **visual schedules**, the next page may be helpful. As you point to each picture, you can briefly explain what will happen:

The doctor will put the swab in my cheek. They will rub my cheek 10 times. It will feel like a soft tickle in my cheek.

Now it is time for the other side. The doctor will put the swab in my cheek. They will rub my cheek 10 times. It will feel like a soft tickle in my cheek.

Then you will be all done and can *[insert reward here]*!

---



x10



x10



all done

