

SHARE WHAT HAS WORKED IN THE PAST

- Has your child had a shot, IV or their blood drawn in the past?
- Tell the team what worked well or did not work well.



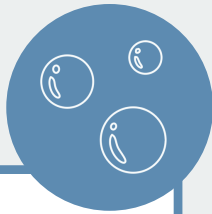
EXPLAINING THE PROCEDURE TO YOUR CHILD

- Would it help to look at pictures or a social story so they know what to expect?
- Be honest
- Explain what will happen using child friendly language and descriptions that help them understand how things will feel
 - First, they will put a rubber band on your arm that feels like a tight squeeze
 - Then they will clean your arm which may feel cold and wet
 - Next you will feel a small pinch/poke
 - Then you will get a special band-aid
 - After we are all done, we will [insert possible reward or fun activity]



MAKE A PLAN

- Be honest & provide child friendly explanations that include a sequence of events so your child knows what to expect
- Determine if your child wishes to watch or would rather be distracted. Distraction can help reduce stress during procedures.
 - Here are some ideas to utilize!
 - Watching a video or music on phone/tablet
 - Playing with toys
 - Blowing bubbles
 - Squeezing a stress ball
 - Taking deep breaths
 - Counting
- Practice the lab draw and coping plan at home through medical play



COMFORT POSITIONING STRATEGIES

- Sitting with, laying with, being hugged or held by a parent in a comforting way can help put your child at ease
- Talk to the phlebotomist about different positioning options depending on your child's age and size
 - Hugging chest to chest
 - Sitting in caregiver's lap
 - Sitting next to a caregiver



REWARDS

- Some children benefit from motivation based strategies
- Something highly preferred the child will get after the lab draw is complete
 - Special snack or treat, screen time, new toy
 - Provide child with choice
 - Decide this BEFORE you begin the procedure
 - Make sure to bring it with you to the appointment



HELPFUL TIPS

- Allow child to keep distraction items in their hands. Don't remove these even if they are having a hard time.
- Provide reminders about their job which includes holding still and keeping their body calm
- Normalize fears instead of minimizing them ("it's ok to feel scared, let's take 3 deep breaths together")
- Avoid minimizing their experience. Focus on validating and praising bravery. ("It's normal to feel nervous, you are doing a great job holding still")

