



How to Help...Your Child in Pain

Watching your child in pain can be a very distressing experience. The medical and nursing staff at the hospital do all they can to minimize your child's discomfort and pain while in the hospital. As we learn more about the mechanics of pain, we understand that pain not only a physical response but an emotional response as well. There are times when pain medication is not the sole cure. Here are some tips on how to help your child manage the pain...

- Provide your child with as many reasonable choices as possible and give them some control over treatment.
- Provide your child with honest, accurate, and age appropriate information in regards to their hospital experiences. Some of a child's anxiety and fear can be subsided when they are properly informed.
- Give your child the opportunity to ask questions and express their feelings.
- Ask your child about their fears and clear up misconceptions they may have. If their fear is based on prior experience, talk through that experience and discuss how you can work together to help to make the next experience a better one.
- Do your best to reduce the extra stimulation and anxiety in the room. Children pick up on the emotions of adults (especially parents), so create a calm environment with those people that can remain relaxed and supportive.
- Encourage your child to practice deep breathing. Breathing creates a sense of relaxation. Bubbles and pinwheels are a great tool.
- Provide your child with items for distraction. Re-focus their attention onto something they enjoy such as playing a game.
- Encourage your child to use their imagination and focus their attention onto telling a story.
- Provide opportunities for comforting touch such as holding and cuddling.
- Remain close to your child. Children often feel more secure when their parents are close by.