

FACTSHEET



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Comforting your baby during painful procedures

If you are reading this factsheet, you have brought your baby to hospital and they require some further tests to see what has made them unwell.

This factsheet will explain how you can help your baby during their time in hospital. You can help comfort your baby by using these techniques while they undergo potentially painful procedures throughout their stay.

Pain

Babies experience pain and distress just like any child, young person or adult, therefore it's important that we manage their pain and distress just like we would for any other patient.

Types of procedures we may need to do for your baby:

There are many different procedures we may need to do. Some of these may include:

-Cannulation: Inserting a needle into the vein to collect a blood sample. Often we leave a plastic tube device taped down to give medication and fluids afterwards.

-Lumbar Puncture: Is a test when a doctor inserts a needle in the lower back to get a sample of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) for testing.

-Urine catheterisation: A fine, sterile plastic tube inserted into your baby's bladder through their urethra to collect a clean sample of urine for testing.

-Intramuscular injection: inserting a needle into your baby's muscle to give a medication, like an antibiotic or immunisation.

-Naso-suction: inserting a tube into your baby's nose to collect a sample of mucous for testing or for clearing mucous to help your baby breath better.

How can you help manage your baby's pain?

There are many ways in which you can help manage your baby's pain during potentially painful procedures. These include: Sucrose, Breast Feeding, Swaddling/wrapping, Skin to Skin or Kangaroo Care, Non-Nutritive Sucking (NNS), Positioning or Facilitated Tucking, singing/humming or playing relaxation music.

Sucrose and Breast Feeding

Sucrose is a sweet sugar solution given to babies up to 12 months of age during painful procedures. Sucrose can help reduce some of your baby's pain responses such as increased crying time, heart rate and breathing rate. Staff may ask you to help give your baby sucrose during procedures from a small plastic vial. Breast feeding is equally as effective as sucrose and can be used if the situation allows.

Swaddling/Wrapping

Swaddling helps to calm young babies. It provides comfort and safety and is a good way to help manage pain and distress. By wrapping your baby during and after

the procedure, it can help your baby recover and return to their normal self. It has been shown to help comfort babies, reduce their heart rate and increase their oxygen levels.

Skin to Skin or Kangaroo Care

Skin to skin or kangaroo care is skin contact between parent and child. This is done by placing your baby on your chest without any clothes on. Offering your baby skin to skin 10-30minutes before a procedure and 10mins after the procedure has been shown to help a baby return their heart and breathing rates to their normal levels. It also works as a tool to help with feeling connected to your baby and personally help them settle after a painful procedure.



Image: <https://creazilla.com/nodes/6818-breastfeeding-mother-clipart>

Non-nutritive sucking (NNS)

Non-nutritive sucking (NNS) involves placing a dummy or pinky finger in an infant's mouth to promote a sucking behaviour. For it to work effectively NNS needs to be started at least 3 minutes prior to the start of a painful procedure. NNS works best when combined with Sucrose. It has been shown to significantly reduce crying and pain responses, lowering pain scores in infants.

Positioning or Facilitated Tucking

Positioning or Facilitated Tucking is when you gently position an infant with their arms and legs tucked into their body and place them on their side. The infant should be supported via the head and neck. This helps to reduce stress-related behaviours and help return observations such as their heart rate and oxygen levels to normal.



Image: <https://creazilla.com/nodes/6790-baby-sleeping-clipart>

You have an important role!

You as the parent and care giver are a very important part of providing pain relief to your child.

If you have any questions regarding pain management for your baby and want to be involved in your baby's care, nursing and medical staff are happy to help!

For some procedures it may be possible for you to hold your baby. You can discuss this with the nursing and medical staff.

Singing or talking to your baby during and post medical procedures can help to calm and settle them.

Remember:

Managing your baby's pain is important to us. You can be involved with managing your baby's pain. You are an important part of the process.

Remember to ask questions and be involved during your baby's care.

We always have your baby's best interests at heart, however if you feel we could do more to comfort your baby during a painful procedure, please speak up and let staff know.