

COVID-19 VACCINATION KIT



What is a COVID-19 vaccination kit?

- This toolkit contains resources for parents and carers of children aged 5-11 years who will receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Each tip is designed to help your child before, during and after the appointment. Using this toolkit will help you reduce your child's fear of needles and pain.
- Research shows that when you use the resources in this toolkit, your child
 - has less pain now and in the future
 - develop healthy habits that can help in the future

WAYS TO MANAGE PAIN AND ANXIETY



WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children say that needles are their biggest fear when it comes to health care. Our children's fears are real and need to be treated with care. Fears can affect children in the long term.



WHAT PARENTS SAY

Caregivers do their best to relieve children's pain. Parents trust that health care providers will do their best. They have a responsibility to provide health care in the best way possible.



TAKE THE TIME

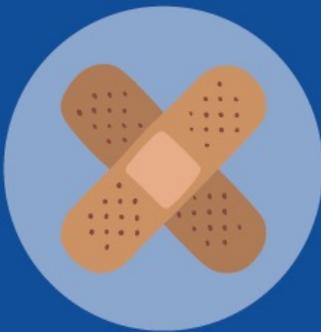
There is evidence that when a child receives a vaccine, you can ease the pain with

- positive language
- a comfortable position
- distraction
- anaesthetic ointment



MEMORY

Memory is a powerful tool for how a child experiences future pain. Using positive language can change a child's memory of the vaccine.



PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Untreated needle pain can increase susceptibility to future pain. It can lead to the development of a pre-procedural fear and/or phobia of needles. This fear may persist throughout life.



PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

Children whose pain has not been treated during a medical procedure will have fewer opportunities for preventive health care later in life. They will be less likely to comply with recommended vaccination schedules.

COPING WITH THE PAIN OF NEEDLE STICK: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

1. **Be confident.** If you are anxious, try to remain calm when discussing the vaccine with your child before, during and after the injection. Parent/caregiver anxiety can make the child's experience more stressful. Be a calm and supportive role model for your child. Watch your body language and voice. If you stay calm, your child will have a better experience. . However, if you feel that you will not be able to control your anxiety or discomfort, do not hesitate to entrust your child to another trusted family member or friend. If you or your trusted person stay calm, your child will have a better experience.

2. **Prepare your child.** Tell your child what to expect. This may be days, hours or minutes before the vaccine. Tell them what you will both do to make the experience as positive as possible. Remind them of things they have experienced in the past. Explain what everyone's role is during the vaccination. **Example:** *"Your job is to sit still. My job is to hold your hand. The nurse's job is to give you the vaccine."*

3. **Language.** The words you use are important. Point out what they do well. Stay positive. **Example:** *"You are doing very well sitting still"*. Use words to distract your child. Tell stories, make funny noises, sing songs. Be creative! Avoid expressions such as *"I know"*, *"I'm sorry"* or *"It's almost over"*, which can cause anxiety. They can increase the feeling of pain.

4. **Think comfort.** Ask your doctor and pharmacist for an anaesthetic ointment and apply it to your child's arm before the vaccination. Bring toys/electronics to distract them. Let your child sit on your lap. Hold your child's hand. If possible, allow your child to choose how to sit. Talk to your child about these techniques before the vaccination and ask him or her what s/he prefers, make choices together. They will then know what to expect and have a sense of control of the situation.

5. **Reminder.** Your child's pain is influenced by the way we talk about it. By pointing out what went well, you can create more positive memories of the vaccination. This can help the next vaccination go smoothly. Remind your child of the good things that happened to reinforce positive memories. Make the vaccination an experience as good as possible for the child. **Example:** Give your child a small reward (like a sticker) after the vaccination.



Motivation

BAROMETER

LANGUAGE GUIDE :

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT VACCINATION

Studies show that the way we talk to children about vaccines affects their understanding. Our words can also influence how easy they will find future vaccinations. Here is a guide on how you can talk to your child about vaccines before, during and after the appointment.

BEFORE

Explain what will happen

"You sit in a chair or you sit on my lap. You roll up your sleeve and we watch a show on the tablet, sing a song,... while you get your vaccine. It's normal to feel nervous. It's okay to feel unsafe."

Use neutral words

Use words like: "You may feel something tickling you" or "Your arm may be sensitive afterwards". Words that should be avoided are: "Stick", "Ouch", and "Pain".

Explain the role of each

"The nurse will give you your vaccine". "Mum or Dad will hold your hand", "Your job is to say how you feel, keep your arm still, etc."

Will it hurt?

You can say, "I don't know exactly how you'll feel, but maybe you can tell me how you felt when we've finished."



DURING

Encourage your child

"You are doing a great job sitting still", "You are doing a great job asking questions", "I am proud of the way you are handling this situation".

Use neutral words

"Here it comes" instead of "Here comes the shot". Warning words can cause discomfort, as can the face you make when you say them. They can convey a negative meaning.

Avoid the following

"I'm sorry", "I know", "It's almost over", "Don't worry".

This can cause the child even more stress. These are often false assurances.

Speak in a calm tone

Children respond more positively if their parent/guardian remains calm. Use your normal voice during the vaccination.



AFTER

Be positive

There are many positive points to mention! For example, the friendly caregiver, a distraction object you used, the sticker they received, the playground afterwards, ...

Be realistic

Ask: "How does it feel?" Validate their feelings. If they are exaggerating, you can put them in context and be realistic. Example, "Yes, you cried a little and you were also very brave when you stood still."

Remind your child how brave he/she was

This will build their confidence. Tell them how brave they have been by holding out their arm. Or how they focussed on the distraction object (e.g. a toy or a book).

Memory

By focusing on the positive aspects, your child will have a more positive memory of the experience. This will help your child to be less scared next time.



ANAESTHETIC OINTMENT : METHOD OF REDUCING THE PAIN OF THE NEEDLE

What is an anaesthetic cream?

Anaesthetic ointment is a medicine applied to the skin to reduce the pain and discomfort of vaccinations and other injections. It is available as an ointment or a patch. There are different types of anaesthetic ointments. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what is suitable for your child.



Where can I get it?

The anaesthetic ointment is available in almost all pharmacies. Ask your doctor for a prescription and get the anaesthetic ointment from your pharmacist in advance. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the product you choose.



How should I apply it?

The ointment or patch should be applied 30–60 minutes before the vaccine. Read the product instructions before use. Follow the instructions to find out how much ointment to apply. This depends on the age of your child and the product you are using. The ointment or patch should be applied to your child's upper arm, where the vaccine will be given. Avoid areas where the skin is broken.



Ask your health professional

- Always consult your health care provider before using any medication.
- Anaesthetic ointments are safe and have few side effects if used as directed.
- You may have whiter or redder skin. This is common.
- More rarely, a skin rash, swelling or hives may occur. These side effects may be signs of an allergy. Remove the ointment immediately and inform your healthcare professional.

Some children cannot use anaesthetic ointment. Tell your healthcare provider before using anaesthetic ointment if your child has any of the following characteristics:

- Open spots on the skin
- Kidney or liver disease
- Sensitivity or allergy to anaesthetics
- G6PD deficiency
- Congenital/idiopathic methaemoglobinaemia



DISTRACTION AND POSITIONING GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AGED 5 TO 11 YEARS

SITTING UP STRAIGHT IS THE BEST



Using a comfortable position can help your child feel more in control. This makes them feel safer and more supported, less likely to hurt themselves and more likely to co-operate during treatment. Sitting is usually the best position for a child to be in when receiving a vaccine. Discuss this with your healthcare professional: there are alternatives to sitting up straight if this is not the best position for your child.

HELD BY A PARENT



Children want to be comforted by their parents or guardians. Letting your child sit on your lap or holding their hand provides physical and emotional support. Ask your carer to help you both find a comfortable position during your child's appointment so that you can stay close. Remember, as a trusted adult, you can help ease your child's anxiety by keeping your body language calm.

DISTRIBUTION



Distracting your child during the vaccination is a proven way to reduce anxiety and pain. Ask your child what toy or object they would like to bring to the appointment.

Examples: A favourite toy, a video or app on a tablet or smartphone, books, breathing techniques, a fidget spinner, a glitter stick, a stress ball,.....

You know your child best. Talk to your health care provider about other techniques that may be helpful for your child.