

Treatment guide/reminder for needle procedures at Starship Child Health

Before the procedure

- If **GREEN** 'Play Specialist' sticker is applied to the request form, please ensure Play Specialist has prepared the child, parent/caregiver prior to the procedure.
- Prepare the child, parent/caregiver about what to expect- explain that a blood test involves a finger-prick or blood collection from the arm, or that an injection or IV-line means there will be a needle/tube used "to help get the medicine in".
- Keep it simple and honest. Family should be given an explanation as to why the procedure is needed, how it usually happens, what they might feel and what things will be done to make it comfortable
- Use language to suit the child, taking into consideration their age and understanding
- Remain calm-your reaction to a stressful situation will influence the child's reaction
- Focus should be on the child, **not** how quickly or successfully the procedure is done

Numbing (pain relief for skin break procedures whenever possible)

- EMLA cream applied **60-90** minutes pre-procedure (**Must be applied by clinical staff**)
- AMETOP: **30 minutes pre injection/45 minutes pre-cannulation** (**Must be applied by clinical staff**)
- Ethyl Chloride Spray sprayed topically (**Do not spray on finger, only for venous collections**)
- 'BUZZY'® (Vibrates and confuses the body's nerves to distract attention from pain)- see [Buzzy® Guideline](#)

Comfort/positioning

It's helpful for children to decide whether they want to lie down or sit for the procedure. It's good to give them choices they can control

- For babies under 18 months, **sucrose solution or breast feeding** where appropriate should **begin 2 minutes pre-procedure** (**Sucrose solution needs to be charted by medical staff**)
- Infants: Swaddling, skin-to-skin contact, pacifier, toys, blankets, stroking face
- Toddlers: Parent/caregiver to hold the child close, toys, blankets
- School age: Parent/caregiver to hold child or stay close by during the procedure
- Teens: Sitting upright (if teen wants to), parent/caregiver available for support

Distractions

- Ensure distraction methods have been initiated (by parent/caregiver/Play Specialist) **prior** to initiation of the procedure
- Play Specialists can provide distraction activities
- Visual-i.e. iPad/smart phone from home, books, posters, pictures, "I Spy"
- Tactile-i.e. toys, games, bubbles, pinwheels