

Pain Relief: Comfort Kit



It is understood that kids have pain, especially while in the hospital. When kids are actively engaged in a fun activity, their pain and anxiety goes down.

Pain might be due to procedures or treatments, or from their illness or injury.

How children cope with pain is different for each of them. Some kids will not talk about their pain, while others will cry and yell.

This page describes ways parents can help their child reduce pain using play and imagination. These methods will work in the hospital or at home. These strategies for easing pain work well with pain medication your child may need. Talk to your child's nurse, child life specialist, or social worker for more ideas.

The toys in the following list may help. Children are encouraged to make choices about what may work best for them to reduce pain.

Wand

Why this can work: the wand helps your child pay attention to something other than pain and encourages imagination.

Here are some ideas:

- Use the wand to make the hurt disappear in the same way you might kiss something to make it better.
- Concentrate on the movement of the sparkles.
- Make the wand magic and pretend to travel to a favourite place.

Bubbles

Why this might work: bubbles can help teach deep breathing, which can relieve stress and anxiety.

Here are some ideas:

- Blow with long slow breaths.
- Have the child blow the hurt away.
- Predict where the bubbles will land and pop.
- Have a contest to see who can blow the bubbles the furthest.
- How many bubbles can you blow at once?

Story and activity books

Why this can work: books and stories can help your child pay attention to something other than the pain and encourage imagination.

Here are some ideas:

- Books for younger children involve touching various textures, rhymes, and pop-ups.

- Books for older children involve mazes, searches, and puzzles.
- Pick books that are simple and familiar. A more challenging activity may be frustrating.
- Ask questions about the book that cannot be answered with yes or no or maybe. For example: "what do you think will happen next?"

Music

Why this can work: music can help your child relax.

- Soothing for younger children.
- Your child can sing or hum with music.
- You may want to use this as a background activity while focusing on another.
- Music can be useful in encouraging movement.
- When the music is fast-paced, it encourages children to tense up their muscles. Encourage children to clap, bang their fists, or click their tongue to the beat of the music.
- Music is also useful when a child is not able to do a more interactive game.

ViewMaster

Why this can work: the ViewMaster provides a 3D visual distraction.

- Have your child choose a slide.
- Let the child tell what he or she sees.
- Let child create their own story based on what they see.

Stress ball

Why this can work: a stress ball can give your child a "job" to do or a place to transfer nervous energy.

- Transfer pain or stress onto the ball and out of the body.
- Count how long you can squeeze the ball without stopping.
- Count while opening and closing your fist around the ball.
- Transfer the ball from one hand to the other.

Video games, computer, and television

Why this can work: these things are usually familiar and can be relaxing.

Create a balance for your child while they are in the hospital between activities using electronics and other more creative and expressive experiences.