

I can tell you how to comfort my child during procedures

Insulin needles are small, thin, and smooth. They are not like the larger needles used to give immunizations. If you want to know what an injection feels like for your child, you can inject yourself with sterile salt water (**saline**) using an insulin syringe. Your nurse can get this sterile saline for you.

Room temperature insulin will help prevent stinging. Staying relaxed during injections will help with comfort. If your child is anxious about the injections, numb the area by placing something cold on it for several seconds before the injection.

Many children want to avoid injections, no matter how painless they may be. They may become emotional, upset, or have a tantrum, especially after a diagnosis when injections are new to them. In most cases, the emotional outbursts that children have is from anxiety about injections, not because the injections are painful. Although it can be difficult at times, caregivers of children with type 1 diabetes must be firm about giving injections. Every injection saves your child's life.

Here are some ways children are comforted during blood sugar checks and insulin injections:

- Stay relaxed while giving finger pokes and injections. If you are anxious, they may become anxious too.
- Use the sides of the fingertips for blood sugar checks. These hurt less because they have fewer nerve endings than fingertip pads.
- Use a new lancet and new syringe each time. Needles become dull with each use, which can cause pain.
- Don't use a bent lancet or a syringe needle.
- Cold insulin may sting. Room temperature insulin is usually more comfortable.
- Try a **comfort hold**. Hug your child on your lap during a finger poke or injection.

- During a finger poke or injection, have your child blow bubbles or breathe out instead of holding his or her breath.
- Numb the area where the injection will go by placing ice on the skin a few seconds before.
- Have your child squeeze your hand or a stress ball during pokes or injections.

Make it clear that blood sugar checks and injections are not a choice. Use phrases like “It’s time to check a blood sugar. Do you want to use your right hand or your left hand this time?”

After the injection, give your child praise or a hug. Let your child know he or she did well.

Now that you’ve read this:

- Tell your nurse or doctor how to comfort your child during blood testing.
(Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse or doctor how to comfort your child during insulin shots.
(Check when done.)

Disclaimer

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