



INFORMATION ON CHILDREN AND PAIN: DID YOU KNOW....?

- Untreated pain causes anxiety, depression, irritability and exhaustion and can slow healing.
- Children as young as three years of age can identify the intensity of their pain.
- Children who are engaged in play may still be experiencing pain.
- Children who ask for pain medicine usually are in pain.
- Pain medicine should be used to keep pain away, not to "catch up" with pain.
- Children need to be honestly prepared for painful procedures with a full range of possible sensations (for example, "this may sting for a minute" or "this may feel very cold and then pinch").
- Spinal taps, blood draws and the starting of intravenous lines can be made less painful by using a local anesthetic, such as EMLA cream (lidocaine 2.5% and prilocaine 2.5%), that when applied one or two hours prior to a procedure, reduces the pain of needles. Please consult full prescribing information before use.
- A variety of non-drug techniques, such as distraction, hypnosis or relaxation training can help relieve children's anxiety and pain.
- Pain is best treated by combining drug and non-drug methods.
- Giving children choices, such as which finger gets stuck with a needle or whether they sit on the examining table or on a parent's lap for a shot, can lessen anxiety and pain related to painful procedures.
- Besides the children themselves, parents are the best experts on recognizing and interpreting their children's pain.
- The best way to measure pain is to ask the child how much he or she hurts.

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