

What to Tell Your Child About a Procedure

The staff at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center understands that planning for your child's procedure can be a stressful process.

You can help your child by using the following tips:

Infants (0 to 12 months old)

Familiar objects and people are important to infants.

- Bring a favorite blanket, toy or pacifier.

Toddlers (1 to 3 years old)

- Allow choices, such as which stuffed animal to bring or what to wear.
- Help explain what the staff will do before they touch your child.
- Allow staff to look at your ears first or listen to the stuffed animal's heart to help put your child at ease.

Preschoolers (3 to 5 years old)

- Prepare your preschooler about three days in advance.
- Talk to your child about the hospital.
- Be honest, giving simple explanations. Some suggestions for common words used by our staff are:
 - Stretcher - "Bed with wheels"
 - Blood pressure cuff - "Arm hug"
 - Anesthesia - "Sleepy air"
 - Induction room - "Sleepy air room"
 - Recovery room - "Wake up room"
- Play is how preschoolers learn, so playing hospital or doctor is very helpful.

Elementary School-Age Children (5 to 12 years old)

- Prepare your child about a week ahead of the visit.
- Allow your child the opportunity to ask questions and talk about concerns.
- Be honest.
- Explain what he / she will see after the procedure (stitches or bandages).

Teens (12 to 18 years old)

- Teenagers are learning independence and decision-making.
- Teens are concerned with body image, privacy and relationships with friends.
- Talk about what is going to happen, and encourage your teen to participate in decision-making.
- Be honest.
- Encourage your teen to ask the doctor or nurse questions.
- Respect your teen's need for privacy.
- Have your teen read the "[Tips for Teens Having Surgery](#)" section.

What to Tell Other Children in the Family

Other children in the family may have questions, too. Use simple, honest language that he / she can understand when talking about the upcoming procedure.

Contact the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's

For more information or to request an appointment for the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, please [contact us](#).