

Tips & Tricks for managing needle phobia

For Parents

1. Prepare for Success

Set realistic and achievable goals for practice and provide immediate rewards. These practice tasks could be as simple as visiting a pathologist clinic or looking at photos and rewards can be a mixture of affection, praise, material rewards or extra screen time.

2. Don't shy Away from conversations or opportunities to practice or to model positive medical experiences. Take them a long with you for your own needles and be open about conversations without minimising the challenge that your children face.

3. Try not to dismiss the anxiety your child is experiencing by saying "it won't hurt" or "you'll be fine". These are very difficult experiences for your child and it's best to be on their team and see it as a goal you're both working towards.

4. Ensure a position of comfort with close contact to the parent/guardian, upright if appropriate to facilitate access to the required parts of the body without too much restriction. Swaddling and tucking in a warm blanket is encouraged for infants whilst forcible restraint is generally not recommended during medical procedures for children of any age. Massage, hugging, gentle tapping and stroking may also help build comfort.



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