How To Use Buzzy + DistrACTION Most Effectively

To improve pediatric procedural distress, address Fear, Focus, and Pain!

Fear: Children are less fearful when they know what’s happening and feel in control. When asked if they’re going to get a shot, avoid using the words pain or hurt. Instead, use the word “bother”, and answer this way:

“Yes, but a lot of kids aren’t that bothered the way we give them. Before you get them, I’ll show you how we make them more comfortable now.”

Before giving shots, let patients touch Buzzy, or press Buzzy on a hand or forearm, and lightly scratch the area distal to the Buzzy. “See how cold this is, and see how you can’t feel so much anymore?”

Seeing for themselves and agreeing with you helps the child feel in control. Placing the child in a “position of comfort”, e.g. with the parents arm around them, or facing them on a lap for younger children, also increases children’s security.

Focus.* Helping a child focus elsewhere during procedures engages the same part of the brain that processes pain. Hold, give, or engage a parent to ask children questions on the back of DistrACTION Cards; memorize a question or two to get them started. The combination of a visual finding task and focus decreases pain.

Pain Relief: Just like holding a burn under running water, vibration and cold interrupt the sharp pain feeling. For best results, put the HARD frozen Ice Wings behind Buzzy, then press Buzzy on the injection site itself for about one minute. During the injection, having the parent, nurse, or older patient slide Buzzy just above the injection site (red dot) and hold it firmly in place blocks pain directly.

To emphasize, give the shot or start IV while Buzzy is still buzzing and on the arm.

*About 20% of children will want to watch the shots. Let them, this usually means they get some control watching, and the fear reduction from feeling in control helps reduce pain.