



# Magic Tricks for Needle Sticks

Several techniques can make procedures “magically” better! Use these tips before, during, and after a procedure to make make the experience a positive one.

**Before Procedure:** Provide an age-appropriate explanation of what will happen for the child, and give a chance to ask questions. Language matters:

- 🐝 Use the words: **bother**, **tight squeeze**, or **poke** in place of: **hurt**, **sting**, or **shot/needle**
- 🐝 If asked “Will it hurt?” be honest, and calm. Say:
  - *It’s probably not going to be that big a deal for you.*
  - *Let’s make a plan to make it more comfortable*
  - *The tight squeeze may not be fun, but that part is very short. It may not even bother you.*

**During Procedure:** Immediately effective interventions include letting children sit in a “position of comfort” and using distractions.

- 🐝 **Don’t apologize!** Apologizing and empathizing (“I’m sorry, it’s okay honey, I know...”) ironically increase distress.
- 🐝 Face the child toward the parent, sitting on the lap. For an IV, rest the child’s arm on the gurney while the parent gives a hug. For shots, face a child sideways in the parent’s lap, so the shot arm can be relaxed.

**Buzzy**  
DRUG FREE PAIN RELIEF®

**Proven • Reusable  
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IV Starts



Shots



Finger Sticks

**DistrACTION**  
Magical Moments



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# Magic Tricks for Needle Sticks

(Continued from front)

## Distraction with Props:

-  Blow bubbles, pinwheels, or a kazoo.
-  Find small details, or count things on bright pictures (or use DistrACTION® Cards).
-  Have the child focus on the vibration or ice pack from Buzzy® or move attention away from the procedure. Rub on toes, or massage the other arm.

## Distraction without Props:

-  Color Cloud - the child holds a big breath, then imagines breathing a color out during the procedure. Try aiming puff at held up fingers, or imaginary targets!
-  Touch or tickle the uninvolved arm, direct the child to concentrate on these sensations instead.
-  Tell a story with child-given details: What color is the castle, what kind of animal, what dessert is on the King's table?
-  Count anything - dots, ceiling tiles, letters in a sign.

**After Procedure:** Praise the child no matter what!

More detailed instructions can be found on MMJ Labs' website, [www.BuzzyHelps.com](http://www.BuzzyHelps.com)

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