



How to Prepare Your Child for A Visit to Connecticut Children's Medical Center

- When making your appointment, ask what the visit will include.
- Use picture stories to teach your child what to expect during the visit. <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/planning-your-visit/picture-stories/>
 - *Review the steps provided for the visit.*
 - *Tell your child that the steps and waiting times may need to change. Let him/her know that this is okay.*
 - *Practice what you can at home.*
 - *Encourage your child to ask questions.*
- While it may not be possible to arrange a tour with all departments, you can ask if a tour is possible when scheduling.
- If a department is unable to set up a tour you can call **860.545.9700** to see if Child Life can assist you.



ARRIVING AT THE HOSPITAL

- If you are scheduled at 282 Washington Street
 - Arrive early.
 - Allow time for parking.
 - Consider valet parking at the hospital entrance across from the visitor garage.
- You will need to check in at the security desk. Be prepared for lines.
 - The line will move quickly but there still may be a lot of people and activity. It may be loud and visually overwhelming.
 - If your child has trouble waiting in lines:
 - Consider using the Washington Street entrance.
 - If possible, bring a second person with you to help occupy your child or bring him/her to a more quiet area, while someone waits in line.
 - If your child becomes upset, please ask a security guard to help you check in and get to your visit.
- Your child will be given an identification sticker.
 - If stickers upset your child, put the sticker on your child's back.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE VISIT

- You know your child best and have a good idea of what things will make your child comfortable.
- Your child is encouraged to bring comfort items such as a blanket or stuffed animal to your visit.
- Consider making a sensory tool kit to bring with you to the visit.

If you are not sure what to bring in the tool kit, ask your child's teacher or therapist for suggestions.

- Items may include but are not limited to:
 - Tablet
 - Cell phone apps
 - Electronic toy
 - Favorite snack if permitted to eat
 - Fidget toys
 - Chewable items
 - Music
 - Paper and markers
 - Books
 - Headphones
 - Sunglasses
 - Hats
 - Blanket
 - Child's communication system (i.e. PECS, i-pad etc.)
- If you forget to bring items for your child, ask the provider what might be available.



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL VISIT

- We want to know what works best for your child.
- Share strategies and/or behavior plans that work at home with the medical team - familiarity is comforting.
 - Examples include but are not limited to:
 - Taking deep breaths
 - Counting
 - Use of distraction
 - Familiar instructions or phrases
 - Familiar routines
- You can ask if changes can be made to the environment or the order of the procedures to support your child during the visit. We will do the best we can to meet your child's needs. You can:
 - Call before visit
 - Ask at department check in
 - Ask during the appointment
- Stay calm and use a soft voice to encourage your child to act the same way.
- Use simple directions—give one direction at a time.
- Give your child enough time to respond.
- Praise your child for good behavior and offer him/her a reward for completing all of the steps of the visit.
- If your child has a hard time participating at the visit, consider using a first/then strategy.
 - **First** the child does what is required and **then** they get something rewarding.
 - If you think that your child will need a lot of encouragement, plan to give him/her small rewards for completing individual steps in the visit.
 - If you are recommending food as the reward for participating, please check with the provider to see if this is allowed.
- Be proactive - remind the child what they are working for to motivate them to participate.
- Show trust and respect toward the medical team so your child sees that your expectations are the same.
- Do not allow the child to escape unless it is a safety risk to keep them in the exam room. Once the child leaves the room it may be difficult for them to return.
- It is ok for you to remind staff about what works well for your child.

