



## Why should you prepare your child?

Getting a blood test can be a source of anxiety for children. Proper preparation helps:

- Reduce fear and stress
- Make it easier for the healthcare professionals
- Create a more positive experience

## What to expect from the healthcare professionals

During the procedure, the care team will do everything possible to make your child feel safe. You can expect the healthcare professionals to:

- Explain the procedure to your child in a simple and reassuring way
- Ask you to stay close to them, if you wish
- Propose strategies to reduce the pain and/or anxiety:
  - Breastfeeding
  - Position of comfort, comforting object, distraction
  - Cold spray for ages 4 and up (releases a cold spray to numb the skin)
  - Anaesthetic cream that can be obtained from your pharmacist and brought to the appointment
- Respect your child's rhythm as much as possible
- Welcome your suggestions and observations, as you know better than anyone else what reassures them.

*In some cases, gentle and safe holding in place may be necessary to ensure the success of your child's care and safety. This approach is always done in a caring way, with respect for your child and with your cooperation.*

Feel free to ask questions or share your preferences: we work with you to provide your child with gentle, respectful and trusting care.

# PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR A BLOOD TEST

a practical guide  
for parents\*



## Before the day of the blood test: prepare the child gently

Tell them the truth. Inform your child that they will be getting a blood test and give them time to ask their questions.

### Talk to your child

- The doctor needs a little bit of blood to check their health
- Tell them where it's going to happen and that you will be there with them
- An elastic will be placed around their arm to better see their veins
- The skin will be cleaned (this may feel a bit cold)
- A small needle will be used (it may sting a little)
- They'll have to stay still

### Answer their questions

Take the time to respond calmly to their concerns, such as:

- "Will it hurt?"
- "How much blood will they take?"
- "Will I be left with enough?"

### Acknowledge their feelings

Tell them that it's normal to be afraid, nervous or to ask questions.

### Think about hydration

Even if your child needs to fast, they can drink water. This will make the blood test easier.

### Give them a little control

- Give them the option of bringing a stuffed animal, toy, book or snack with them
- Tell them they can select a video to watch during the procedure
- Allow them to decide whether or not they want to look during the procedure

### Practice at home

You can simulate the blood test on their stuffed animal so they can become familiar with the procedure.

### Have a positive attitude

- Remain calm and reassuring
- Avoid talking about your bad experiences
- If you are too stressed, ask another trusted person to accompany them

### Follow the medical instructions

Some studies require fasting: follow the doctor's instructions.



## The day of the blood test: be a reassuring presence

### Stay calm and present

Be friendly with the staff, it reassures the child. In addition, your attitude will influence theirs.

### Cooperate with the healthcare professionals

#### Let them know about:

- Your child's past reactions
- What reassures or helps them
- If you need support to accompany your child

### Hold your child in a comfortable position as directed by the healthcare professionals

- Sitting on your lap
- Turned toward you, like during a hug
- Hand held firmly but gently

### Use distraction

- Try to distract them with their favourite game
- Have them watch a video on your phone or tablet
- Play "I Spy" in the room
- Tell them their favourite story
- Blowing game: pretend to blow out a candle with them

### Encourage them

Tell them they are being brave, that they are doing their best, that they should be proud of themselves.

Avoid misleading phrases such as: "It's nothing" or "You won't feel a thing."

*Your child needs to be able to trust you.*

## After the blood test: reassure them and make them feel proud

- Give them comfort (hugs and gentle words)
- Acknowledge what they went through: "That was difficult, but you did well."