



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."