

# Scared of shots? No problem!

No one likes needles. But you can make your child's vaccine appointments more comfortable.



## How to Comfort Your Child:

### Before

Walk your child through the day's events, including the medical visit and shot. Plan a **fun activity** for after the appointment, like going to a playground or getting ice cream.

Remind older children that vaccines are part of maintaining a **healthy lifestyle**, just like using seat belts or bike helmets.

### During

**Stay calm.** When you are anxious, your child may become anxious, too.

**Hug and hold.** Young children feel comforted if they are hugged or held by you during the shot. Let older children sit upright for a sense of control, and offer a toy or other familiar item for them to hold.

**Soothe.** Provide skin-to-skin contact, breastfeeding, or pacifiers to calm small children. Drinking sugar water may be a welcome distraction.

**Breathe.** Ensure older children take deep breaths before, during, and after shots.

**Talk to your provider** about using a numbing agent before the shot, like 4% lidocaine cream. A shot blocker, which is a plastic tool that blocks the pain from the needle's insertion, may also help.

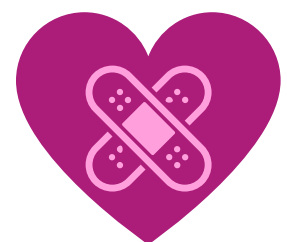
### After

Immediately after the shot, **try to distract your child** with a game, a cartoon, a stuffed animal, or a song.

If your child is fussy after vaccination or develops a fever, give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) to **reduce discomfort**.

If your child is uncomfortable for more than 24 hours, or the fever reaches a high temperature, **call your provider**.

If your child's arm or leg is swollen, hot, or red, apply a clean, cool, **wet washcloth** over the sore for comfort. If the redness or tenderness increases after 24 hours, call your provider.



Learn more at:

[www.boostoregon.org/  
comfort](http://www.boostoregon.org/comfort)

