

Comfort Tips for Parents of Preteens

Before Shots – As easy as 1-2-3

1. Talk with your preteen about shots
 - “At the doctors, they will talk to you about ways to stay healthy, like getting shots.”
 - “Shots help prevent serious diseases that can make you very sick, so you can keep doing the things you love to do.”
 - “Shots may sting a little, but only for a few seconds. Then it is over.”
2. Be calm, supportive, and matter-of-fact
 - Your approach to shots will influence your child’s reaction.
 - Reassure. But, too much concern can cause distress.
3. Remember to:
 - Bring your child’s yellow card (Immunization Record).
 - Read Vaccine Information Statements that’s given at the doctor’s office. Ask any questions.
 - Encourage your child to bring their favorite music.

During Shots

Encourage your preteen to:

Distract themselves by:

- Talking about an upcoming event or activity, like what they are doing after the doctor’s visit.
- Focusing on something in the room, like a poster.

Relax by:

- Taking slow, deep breaths.
- Listening to their favorite music.
- Closing their eyes and thinking of a favorite place or activity.

After Shots

- Give praise and support, and then change the focus.
- Reward your preteen with a special activity or not doing chores for the day.
- Please note: The doctor may want to observe your child for about 15 minutes after he/she is vaccinated.
- If your preteen is feeling dizzy or anxious, help them stay seated.

At Home – What to expect after shots

- Review Vaccine Information Statements for possible reactions.
- A cool wet cloth can reduce redness, soreness, and/or swelling where the shot was given.
- Reduce pain or fever with ibuprofen or acetaminophen, as recommended by your child’s doctor.
- If your child has any reaction in the next few days that concerns you, call your doctor or seek medical attention.
- Remember, it is normal if your preteen feels tired and sore for a few days.

A Parent’s Love Makes all the Difference