As a parent or carer you know your child best and there are lots of ways you can help make a hospital procedure – such as a blood test, X-ray or scan – better for them.

**BEFORE THE PROCEDURE**

+ Make sure you know what will happen before and during the procedure (try looking for information on children’s hospital websites).
+ Tell staff if your child is very worried or has had a bad experience before, so they can give you extra support.
+ Explain everything simply and honestly to your child and give them the chance to ask questions. They might want to know what will happen and how it will feel. Older children may want to think about what might help them if they feel worried.
+ If your child is having a procedure which might hurt, like a blood test, don’t tell them it won’t hurt. Check if they need some local anaesthetic cream or pain relief medicine.

**DURING THE PROCEDURE – BABIES**

- Hold your baby if possible and gently pat or stroke them.
- Offer your baby or child their dummy (if they have one).
- Offer a small feed during the procedure, or five minutes before.*
- Talk softly, sing or play music.
- Swaddle your baby.*
- Give your baby a toy to hold.

*If possible. Always check with staff first.
What happens afterwards is just as important as before!
If your child is upset, stay with them until they are calm.
Give them lots of cuddles or hold hands.
Talk to them about their experience and give them lots of praise for what went well.
A baby or infant might like a feed, if staff agree.

**GOT QUESTIONS?**
If you have any further questions, you can always ask your child’s doctor or nurse.

This leaflet is a general guide and you should always discuss your child’s individual treatment with an appropriate member of staff.