

Commitment to Comfort: Use Positive Language

Ease pain and distress before, during and after immunization

Before and During Immunization

ALWAYS

- Use simple and positive language
- If the client has needle fear, validate and normalize
e.g. *"You seem like you may be nervous, that is normal for a lot of people"*
- Offer hope and comfort strategies to help
e.g. *"We'll do this together, so that you are as comfortable as possible"*
- If sensing distress, ask about previous experiences. Discuss what comfort strategies have worked in the past, build on what went well
- Invite the client to choose an activity to distract themselves
e.g. *"Take a few slow deep breaths, many people find this relaxes them"*
(see [Distraction Techniques Guide](#))
- Talk about what is going well and offer words of encouragement
e.g. *"You are doing a great job"*

After Immunization

ALWAYS

- Talk about what went well
e.g. *"You did a great job relaxing your arm"*
- Highlight comfort strategies the client used that had a positive effect
e.g. *"It seems like relaxation breathing really helped you today"*
- If needed, reframe negative memory statements in a more accurate way
e.g. *"Actually, you relaxed very well with the breathing. You did well"*
- End the immunization with a positive memory
e.g. *"Thank you for getting your immunization today!"*

Before, During and After Immunization

AVOID

- Statements that dismiss the persons fears or anxiety
Avoid saying: *"You're okay" or "Your fears can't be that bad"*
e.g. Instead say: *"If you are feeling nervous, start taking some slow deep breaths"*
- Statements that predict what others will feel
Avoid using pain descriptors such as *"Just a little pinch, pain or hurt"*
e.g. Instead say: *"I don't know how it will feel for you, but if we use some comfort strategies it may not bother you as much"*
- Apologizing, it can imply harm
Avoid saying: *"I'm sorry"*
e.g. Instead say: *"Great job and thank you for getting the immunization today!"*