

Commitment to Comfort: Summary

Ease pain and distress before, during and after immunization

AHS' Commitment to Comfort

- Up to 25 percent of adults have needle fears and up to 10 percent of those are significant enough to avoid immunizations.
- Commitment to Comfort (CTC) is an evidence-based quality improvement initiative to reduce pain and distress experienced by clients.
- As per the [COVID-19 Immunization Policy](#), AHS supports the use of CTC principles in consultation with clients and families to help reduce pain and distress of immunization, as well as to improve immunization readiness, experience and uptake.

Five CTC Principles

1. Make a Comfort Plan

- Discuss with the client if they have any preferred comfort strategies, comfort positions or distraction techniques. Offer choices when possible.

2. Use Positive Language

- Use simple and positive language
- **Always:** talk about what is going well and offer words of encouragement e.g. *"You are doing a great job"*

Leave them with a positive memory e.g. *"Thank you for getting your COVID-19 immunization today"*

- **Avoid:** pain descriptors or saying *"It will be over soon"* or *"It will be OK"*
- See [Positive Language Guide for Immunizers](#)

3. Position Comfortably

- If possible, have the client sit in an upright comfortable position; arm relaxed.
- If the client feels faint, or has a history of fainting with needles:
 - If possible, have them sit or lie down. Encourage alternating muscle tension and relaxation, 15 seconds each. Call for support if needed.

4. Use Distraction

- Shift the client's attention away from the needle using slow deep breathing, rapid fire questions or suggest they use their phone or tablet for a game or music.
- See the [Distraction Techniques Guide](#)

5. Use Numbing Cream

- Numbing cream must be obtained and applied by clients prior to their appointment.
- Numbing cream will not be available or offered at AHS immunization sites.
- Clients can talk with a pharmacist about product that is right for them
- Brand names include: Ametop, Emla and Maxilene; follow application instructions
- Numbing cream may not be right for everyone
- See [Numbing Cream Guide](#)