

Helping your child when they have a dressing



- Dressing changes are often the most difficult part of treatment for everyone. It is normal to feel stressed during your child's dressing change. Unfortunately your stress can make your child feel more stressed.
- Keep the environment calm to increase feelings of safety and reduce anxiety. Anxiety can make pain worse.
- Children need to feel they have some control over what is happening to them. For example, the nurse might ask them to help remove the dressing.

Helping your child before the dressing

- Ask your child what they understand about treatment and use simple language to add information and correct misunderstandings. Explain what will happen before, during, and after the dressing change.
- Ask for more explanation if the doctors or nurses say something you don't understand.
- Give your child pain relief before the dressing as requested by the doctors or nurses.

Helping your child during the dressing

- Engage with your child to distract you both and to reassure them. Chat about their favourite things. Reassure with touch, a soft calm voice, and eye contact.
- Ask the nurse the best way to 'comfort hold' your child for the procedure.
- If you find their wounds hard to accept, remember not to say this in front of your child. They are learning to accept it too.

Phones and photos

- If you want to take a photo ask your child if it is OK. Children can be distressed when photos are taken and shared without their permission.
- Do not share photos from your phone or allow other people to share them. If you want to show photos to other people let them look on your phone.
- A series of photos can help you later on so you can see how well they have progressed.