

Principles of Comfort Central



The administration and staff of Connecticut Children's Medical Center are committed to the creation of an environment where the painful experiences often associated with medical care are minimized whenever possible. This philosophy is incorporated in the term "Comfort Central" which is posted throughout the hospital implying a place where expert medical care and comfort are inseparable.

The following principles guide our practice:

- ① We believe that every child has the right to the best pain relief available.
- ① Pain is a complex multifactorial problem and each individual responds to pain differently. There is no fixed amount of pain allowable for a given illness or procedure
- ① Pharmacologic, physical, and psychological methods should be considered for all pain problems.
- ① It is always better to prevent pain than to treat it once it has occurred. When pain can be anticipated, such as after surgery, it should be addressed preemptively.
- ① Parents should be actively involved in both the assessment of pain and in providing comfort for it.
- ① Assessment is the cornerstone of adequate pain management. Use developmentally appropriate pain-rating scales and re-assess children after an intervention to evaluate if the intervention was effective in reducing pain. Appropriate pain scales may be found in each patient care area.
- ① Recognize that the assessment of individuals with acute pain is different from those with chronic pain. For chronic pain, not only pain intensity but function (eating, sleeping, playing) should be assessed.
- ① Treat the conditions associated with pain such as anxiety, depression, or disruptions of sleep and appetite.
- ① The use of local anesthetics is encouraged to minimize discomfort during needle procedures.
- ① Whenever possible, medical procedures should take place in a treatment room so that the child's room is a safe refuge. Sedation should be considered whenever a procedure is associated with significant discomfort or the child is highly anxious or developmentally delayed. Child life specialists can provide distraction and coping techniques during procedures and throughout hospitalization.

Additional documents provide techniques and strategies with a single aim – making Connecticut Children's a more comfortable place for children and their families.