

# Child Life Program

## Your Child's Vaccination

### What is a vaccine?

- A vaccine is when someone gets a small poke of medicine that protects their body from a virus. The small poke goes into the soft part of an arm or leg gives the medicine and then the poke comes back out.

### How long does it take to have a vaccine?

- A vaccine takes 5 seconds to go in and out of your body. It takes longer to park the car, go to the clinic, or talk to the nurse than it does to get a vaccine. Sometimes after a vaccine, the doctor asks you and your parents to wait to make sure your body feels okay.

### Things to know about a vaccine

- It is important to let your child know that their most important job during the vaccine is to hold very still. Holding still not only helps their body stay safe, but also those around them.

### Preparing your child for a vaccine

- Preparing your child ahead of time can help to reduce their anxiety associated with the vaccine, helps to develop trust between the child and hospital staff and can help to develop positive coping skills.
- Preparation includes explaining to children what their job is during a vaccination (such as being still or taking deep breaths), as well as what they may see, feel or hear.

### What to expect at their visit

- Your child may be asked to either sit in a chair or on a caregiver's lap.
- The nurse or medical assistant will ask the guardian questions to confirm the child's name and birth date.
- The nurse will then clean the side of your child's upper arm.
- The area will be cleaned with an alcohol wipe, which feels cold and wet.
- A small, thin needle is then quickly inserted into the arm and taken back out.
- Pressure will be applied to the site using gauze and a bandage will be applied.

### Tips on how to help support your child

- Involve the child in deciding what they would like to do to help support and distract them during the poke. Below are a few coping strategy suggestions that could help your child:
  - o Have a parent or caregiver present, hold hands or sit on lap
  - o Use a mobile phone or tablet to play a game, watch a video or listen to music
  - o Use a "Buzzy" device
  - o Use a "shot blocker" device
  - o Try deep breathing, counting or singing a song as a distraction

To discuss your child's needs with a Child Life Specialist, email [ChildLifeProgram@ynhh.org](mailto:ChildLifeProgram@ynhh.org)