

Blood Test: Role Play Instructions



Children's National™

Practicing medical procedures in a familiar place, such as home or school, help children with autism understand what to expect and helps promote cooperation. These instructions are **for adults** to learn how to role play, not for the child to look at. We have teaching stories on our website about a blood test that the child can see: <http://childrensnational.org/autismvisualresources>.

Comfort items: Allow your child to pick a comfort item for the doll or teddy, such as a stuffed animal, blanket, or favorite toy.

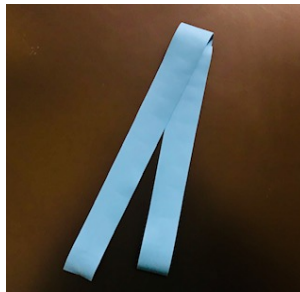
Distraction Items: Allow your child to choose something for distraction or play during the procedure, such as an iPad/tablet, cell phone, book, bubbles, or music.

Supplies: Please e-mail or call to have the below items mailed to you.

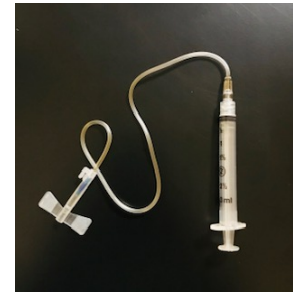
BeyondtheSpectrum@childrensnational.org or 202-476-2884



Gloves



**Stretchy
Band**



**Butterfly
& Syringe**



**Alcohol
wipe**



Gauze



Band-Aid



Reward

Role-play time!

Steps to practice a blood draw:

1. To play the role of the child, use a doll (Barbie's may be too small), a teddy bear, or a willing adult or child. Pictured is Dolly. Tell your child "*Dolly is going to have her blood drawn*" and invite them to watch or help.
2. Lay out all of the supplies in an orderly manner. Put your gloves on first. Tell your child the name of each item and what it is used for.
3. Take the stretchy band and wrap around Dolly's arm. Explain to them that "*Dolly may think it feels a little snug like a hug.*"



4. Tell your child "I will touch Dolly's arm or hand to feel around for a moment, but it will not hurt." Point to the area where the blood draw will take place.



5. Use an alcohol wipe to clean the area you pointed to. Tell your child "*this feels wet and cold.*" Numbing spray is optional if available at the lab. It feels wet and cold like ice.



6. Tell your child *"Dolly will feel a poke but she has to hold her arm still and not move."* Hold the butterfly to Dolly's arm and hold it there for a minute or two.



7. Tell your child *"During the poke, Dolly doesn't have to look. This will only take a minute. She can sing a short song, count to 10 - 5 times, or use a distraction item of choice"*.



8. After a moment, take the stretchy band off and lift the butterfly off the arm. Say "Next we need to cover with gauze and put on a Band-Aid."



9. Place the gauze over the poke site for a moment. Tell your child you have to hold it to the arm with a little pressure to keep the site clean before putting on the Band-Aid.



10. Apply the Band-Aid, and cheer “All done!” Clap and give positive reinforcement for a job well done.



11. Plan a special activity or outing or plan to give your child a reward after the actual blood test. Some lab offices may have stickers or small toys, but it is best to prepare with something that will motivate your child.



To plan your child's blood draw at a Children's National lab location,

Call 202-476-5355 or 202-476-2096.

To request Child Life support for your child's blood draw at the main hospital lab,

Call 202-476-8939

For additional visual supports or resources for medical visits, contact Beyond the Spectrum program:

Phone: 202-476-2884

E-mail: BeyondtheSpectrum@childrensnational.org

Website: <http://childrensnational.org/autismvisualresources>