

Stress Management

Before it gets to be too much

When your child has a health problem, it is easy to get stressed. You may feel helpless, tired, anxious and angry when your child needs you the most. Here are some tips about how to manage stress and get help if you need it.

What are signs of stress?

- Muscle tension
 - Faster heartbeat
 - A “knot” in your stomach
 - Talking louder or faster
 - Loss of or gain in appetite
 - Headaches
 - Inability to sleep
 - Frequent crying
 - Frequent forgetting
 - Loss of sense of humor
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Ways to manage stress

Say one or more of these phrases:

- It is normal to feel overwhelmed in the hospital or at long clinic appointments.
- It is normal to be afraid of what is or may soon be happening to my child.
- It is normal to be confused about why this is happening to my child, my family and me.
- It is normal to feel on the edge and that the smallest things can set me off.
- I know I need to take care of myself to be able to care for my child.
- It is OK if I take a break from being at my child’s bedside. I can ask someone to stay with my child.
- If it does not seem like the right time to leave my child’s bedside, I can ask not to be disturbed by phone calls or visits.
- It is normal to wonder if I could have done something different for my child.
- I will tell my child’s doctor what I am worried about.
- If I don’t understand something, I will ask about it.

To Learn More

- Social Work
206-987-2760
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

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Do one or more of these:

- Go for a walk or step outside for some fresh air.
- Take a coffee or snack break.
- Take deep breaths.
- Talk to a friend or someone who is caring.
- Write down your thoughts and feelings.
- Listen to music you enjoy.
- Get a free massage in the Family Resource Center.
- Come to the Family Resource Center for information and support.
- Take a long, hot shower.
- Do an activity with your child.

What to do during a stressful time

- State your needs. Avoid using insults or blaming someone. Keep a notebook by your child's bed to write down questions, tasks and ideas.
- If you feel yourself reacting, give yourself permission to take a break.
- Try to listen to what is being said, instead of thinking about what you are going to say next.
- Compare what you are saying with what you really mean.
- Think about lots of ways to solve the problem.
- Decide who will take what actions after reaching an agreement.
- If you can't work things out, find a person you respect to help bring about a solution.
- Talk to one of the staff listed, or call one of the numbers on this flyer.

Getting help

If you have concerns about your child's care, talk to your child's nurse, charge nurse or manager.

You may also contact Patient and Family Relations at 206-987-2550 (English and Spanish), send an e-mail message to family.feedback@seattlechildrens.org or fill out one of the comment cards located throughout the hospital.

At Seattle Children's

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| • Social Work | 206-987-2760 |
| • Pastoral Care | 206-987-2273 |
| • Emergencies - after-hours operator | 206-987-2000 |
| • Family Resource Center | 206-987-2201 |
| • Child Life volunteers | 206-987-2037 |

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In the community

- Crisis Line - 24 hours 800-244-5767
- Community Information Line (211) Dial 211 from cell or landline
- Parent Trust Family Help Line 800-932-4673
- Parent to Parent Support program 206-829-7046 or
- (ARC King Co.) 206-829-7053
- Information line Spanish speaking: 206-829-7027
- WA State Psychological Association Psychologist Referral Service wapsych.org
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233 - 24 hours
- Washington Recovery Help Line 866-789-1511
- National Help Line (Treatment Options) 800-662-HELP (4357)
- Teen Link 888-431-8336

Online:

- domesticviolenceinforeferral.org
- kidshealth.org (in Spanish too)
- crisisclinic.org
- parenthelp123.org
- psychologytoday.com (Therapists, Psychiatrists, Support Groups)