



At the hospital: helping bub cope

It can be upsetting and scary for bub when they are ill or injured and needing to stay in hospital for medical treatment. Parents or carers can be scared too.

Bub may feel:

- not themselves
- upset or angry
- anxious, jumpy or confused
- not wanting to listen to you
- quiet and sooky.

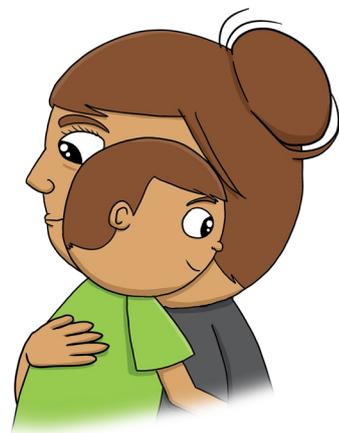
Staff at the hospital will support you and bub if you need it.

Things about being in the hospital that can be scary for bub:

- Being left alone.
- Being away from family and country. Being in a place they don't know and seeing people they don't know.
- Being in pain.
- Having painful procedures, like needles.
- Seeing an injury to their body.
- Looking different – hair loss, swelling or surgical scars.
- Hearing or seeing medical equipment.
- Seeing other hurt or sick kids.
- Not knowing what is going to happen.
- Being afraid of dying.

Carers may be scared about:

- The illness or injury bub has.
- Not understanding or knowing what is happening to bub.
- Bub staying at hospital.
- Seeing bub in pain.
- Being away from family and country.
- How the hospital stay will affect the whole family.
- How they are going to cope.
- How and why bub got the illness/injury, rethinking beliefs.

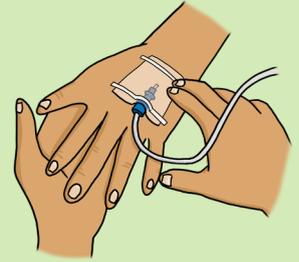


It is important to yarn with someone if you are upset or worried. There are Aboriginal health professionals, social workers, chaplains and mental health staff in the hospital you can talk to.

Ways to help bub cope:

1. You know bub best; be calm, give lots of hugs, hold their hand during tests and procedures, this will help bub.

- You can yarn with them.
- Tell them stories to help calm them.
- Be there for them.
- Let them know their **going good** or are being brave.



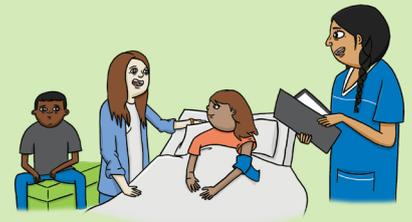
2. Be patient with bub, they will have lots of different feelings, they may cry, have tantrums, be sooky, cling or act out.

3. Be honest about tests and procedures that may hurt them and talk about what's going on.

- Tell them why they need these things done.

4. Yarn together about how they are feeling and let them know it's ok to be scared or to cry.

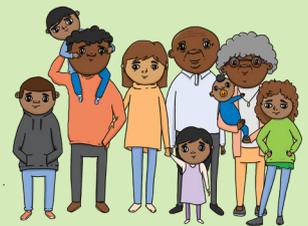
- Listen to them and help them understand what they are feeling is normal.



5. Help bub know that nurses, doctors and other people in the hospital staff are there to **help them.**

6. Bub can be lonely staying at the hospital. Have family and friends visit bub as much as possible.

- Always let them know when you are leaving, why, and when you will be back.



7. Take care of yourself. If you are worried, upset, or not getting sleep, it will be harder to help bub.

- Don't be afraid to ask friends or family for help.
- Yarn about your worries with family, friends, church group or your doctor.



Government of **Western Australia**
Child and Adolescent Health Service

Child and Adolescent Health Service

15 Hospital Avenue, Nedlands, WA, 6009.

Telephone: (08) 6456 2222

Produced by: Paediatric Medicine Clinical Care Unit/ Social Work
Ref: 692.1 © CAHS 2021

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

© State of Western Australia, Child and Adolescent Health Service.