

# How to prepare your child for a doctor's visit

When kids anticipate “going to the doctor,” many become worried and apprehensive about the visit.



## Talk to your child

Children can cope with discomfort or pain more easily if they're forewarned, and they'll learn to trust you if you're honest with them. If you don't know much about the illness or condition, reassure your child that you'll be there and that you will both be able to ask the doctor questions.

## Common fears and concerns



### Separation

Fear of being left in the exam room without a parent



### Pain

Worry that a part of the exam or a medical procedure will hurt



### The unknown

Worry their problem may be worse than told by parents



### Guilt

Belief that their illness or condition is punishment for something they've done or neglected to do



### The doctor

Misinterpreting the doctor's speed, efficiency or a detached attitude as sternness, dislike or rejection

## If your child is anxious

- Encourage him or her to tell you about their fears
- Address their concerns using age-appropriate language
- Have a calm, positive, reassuring attitude
- Tell your child that a doctor can help find out what is wrong and how best to treat it
- Talk about the doctor in a positive way when explaining the purpose of the appointment
- Explain that the purpose of a regular “well-child visit” is to see how he is growing and developing and to make sure that his body is healthy
- Ask the doctor or a nurse what procedures will take place during the office visit and exam when calling for an appointment

