Child Life's goal is to promote positive experiences for children and their families in the healthcare setting.

This teaching sheet is designed to introduce an IV (intravenous) catheter (tiny tube) placement to patients at American Family Children's Hospital. An IV is placed in your vein (the blue lines you see in your hands, arms, or feet) where you can get medicine or have a small sample of blood taken for tests.

**What will I see and feel?**

Tourniquet- which looks like a blue rubber band is used to help the nurse see your veins more easily. It will feel like a tight squeeze on your arm or hand.

Soap- a sponge with liquid soap that is used to help wash the area on your hand or arm. To get the soap out, the nurse has to squeeze the handle, which makes a loud crack noise. Sometimes kids think the soap smells. It will feel cold and wet.

IV catheter- the tiny tube that will go into your arm or hand. It looks like a tiny straw and it is smaller than a paper clip. When it goes in, some kids say it feels like a pinch.

IV tubing- clear tube that connects to the IV that your nurse can use to give you medicine or fluids.

Saline flush- a syringe of water that is put through the IV tubing to make sure the IV is working. Some kids notice a smell or taste when the water goes in the IV. It might feel cold.
Dressing- the tape and clear stickers used to keep your IV in place. It feels sticky like a band aid.

**Practice Ideas for Home**

Lie down on your bed and have someone time you for five minutes to see if you can stay still. While you are lying there, try and think of a place that makes you very happy. This makes the time go very fast.

**Parent Tips**

Ask about:

- Pain control- LMX topical numbing cream, BUZZY Bee (uses vibrations to provide natural pain relief)

- Comfort positioning- ways you can hold your child to reduce stress and promote the parent-child connection.

- Treatment room- on the inpatient unit, a place just for procedures that allows your child’s room to be a safe place

- Child Life Specialist- individuals who prepare you and your child for the procedure and provide support and activities throughout your visit

- Distraction- often provided by Child Life Specialists, but can be done by parents. Using books, toys, music, or any other comfort item to take your child’s attention away from procedure

- Children take cues from their parents, so it is helpful to remain calm

For additional ideas or support during an IV start, please call Child Life at (608) 890-7888. You may also ask staff to page a Child Life Specialist (if available).