



## Helping Infants Cope with Pain

*In addition to medications, infants may benefit from using these strategies to manage pain that is unique to their developmental needs, medical status, and caregiver availability.*

*\*Please work with staff/caregivers to identify the best ways to meet your child's needs\**

### The 5 S's Calming Strategies

- For the first 3 months, infants need supports that mimic the calming sensory experiences of the womb. This can be called the missing 4<sup>th</sup> trimester.
- As you perform the 5 S's, remember that the act of calming baby is like dancing – you have to follow baby's lead. Do the 5 S's intensely when he/she is very upset, and lessen the intensity after he/she begins to settle.
- Always watch for signs of overstimulation, like color changes, hiccupping, or changes in breathing rate. These may be signs that a little less stimulation is needed.

1. **Swaddle** – This will provide a snug feeling of containment. Untuck only the arm or leg needed for the procedure.

*\*Working with staff to swaddle your infant with his/her hands brought up towards the face can promote self-soothing behaviors.*



2. **Side/Stomach** – Babies should always sleep on their backs. However, while you are with him/her, rolling your baby onto his/her stomach or side to can help to calm him/her. This position decreases the chance of activating the 'startle reflex'.
3. **Shhhh** – It is important to match your shushing to the intensity of baby's crying, and to do so close to the ear. As baby becomes more calm, you can decrease the intensity. There should only be one person shushing to prevent overstimulation.
4. **Swaying** – Support your baby's head and neck and gently jiggle him/her like a quiver. These movements should not be more than 1-2 inches side to side. NEVER shake your baby in anger or frustration. Repetitive stimuli like a gentle patting, or gently stroking your baby's forehead, can also calm your baby.
5. **Sucking** – Offer your baby a pacifier, bottle, or breast to encourage sucking. This lowers stress (blood pressure, heart rate) and can trigger release of pain relieving chemicals in the brain.

## Kangaroo Care

- Kangaroo Care is when an infant is held skin-to-skin with their parent to help stabilize and regulate infant temperature, heart rate, and breathing.
- For certain procedures like routine heel sticks, it may be possible for the infant to remain tucked into their kangaroo position for co-regulation and support from the parent.

## TootSweet

- Tootsweet is sugar water that acts as an oral pain reliever for babies at 27 weeks gestation and up to 12 months old (of corrected age).
- Tootsweet is placed on the end of a pacifier, tip of gloved finger, or directly onto the tongue 2 minutes before the start of procedure. Re-dose as needed every 30-45 seconds during the procedure.
- In between re-dosing, place the open container on a clean piece of gauze.

**Please call your Child Life Specialist at 312.227.3270 for further non-pharmacological pain management strategies**

