

Emergency Room Tips for Parents

A trip to the emergency room can be a frightening and anxious time for your child. Here are some tips which might be helpful when faced with such a trip.

- Have on hand a note card with child's name, address, phone number, parents name(s), allergies, immunizations, current (if any) medications, doctor's name and phone number, and nay health insurance information available.
- Be calm with your child. This is a time when the child must draw upon the strengths and security of the parent.... try to have them available!
- Be honest with your child. Never say something won't hurt if it probably will.
- Go to the registration desk first, upon arrival, and briefly describe the problem. Present the information on the note card.
- Waiting can be the most difficult time; have an emergency bag packed and stored in your car with books, little people, crayons, paper, snacks, etc.
- Reassure your child about the individuals who will be caring for him/her. Reassure child that no one is here to punish them.
- Expect a child to cry, fuss, kick, etc. Don't say "You're too big to cry" or "You're acting like a baby." Allow the child to express his feelings.
- Stay with your child as much as possible and honestly explain any conversations he/she overhears.
- Consistent, gentle support will be needed at home. The child may regress to earlier behaviors (thumb sucking, blanket cuddling, and bottle). These behaviors may last for a few hours to several weeks. Avoid being too harsh or over-indulgent.

Copyright 1997, Parent as teachers National Center, Inc. & M. Dept. of Elem. & Sec. Ed.