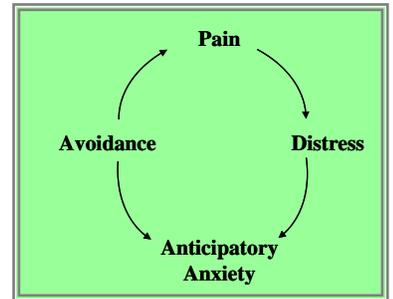




## REDUCING DISTRESS DURING DIABETES-RELATED TASKS

Is your child having a meltdown around diabetes-related tasks?  
 Does your child tell you, “No, not now, later!” or “Leave me alone?”  
 Are you dreading these times of the day?  
 Are you getting discouraged and worried about things ever getting better?

If you said yes to any of the questions above, it is likely that your child has developed these behaviors in order to avoid or put off the expected pain and distress of diabetes tasks that can make him/her very anxious. Unfortunately, since these tasks have to be done, delaying them usually makes things worse. Everyone gets more upset and more tense, which usually increases pain and distress. Family conflict around these tasks can then become a big problem.



**Below are suggestions to help you and your child make managing diabetes easier**

### DO

1. Try to relax and manage your own anxiety  
(Child can pick up on parent distress)
2. Remind everyone to take slow deep breaths
3. Tell them what you are going to do just before  
(They can prepare and use these skills)
4. Make the task predictable  
(We are doing this after that TV show)
5. Follow through with your words the first time  
(Shows child they cannot delay; ends task fast)
6. Refocus child’s attention on something else  
(Bubbles, pinwheel, party blower, IPOD)
7. Plan something fun afterward  
(Focuses child on pleasurable activity)
8. Acknowledge child’s success  
(Stickers, verbal praise, play game)

### DON'T

- Apologize for hurting your child  
(Focuses child on parent’s distress)
- Hold your breath; it can increase tension
- Have them wait long while getting ready  
(Waiting can worsen anticipatory anxiety)
- Give child control over when to start  
(Child will likely delay and delay....)
- Repeat reminders or verbal prompts  
(Reinforces the child’s delay)
- Talk a lot about task or bargain with child  
(Focuses child on task and fear)
- Give in or make false promises  
(I’ll wait until later; it won’t hurt)
- Criticize, hit or threaten to punish  
(Can create resentment and anger)

**Success with diabetes tasks helps children to feel better. They become less anxious and more confident as they master these tasks, and realize that they can manage diabetes with you. This in turn encourages them to cooperate so you can move on to more pleasant activities.**



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