

St. Jude Parents

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Staying awake for scans—faster, safer

Your child might have had anesthesia or sedation for scans in the past. That does not mean it will be needed every time. When a child turns 8 years old, scans no longer include anesthesia unless the medical record notes that it is needed.

To prepare for this change, Child Life's new program Camp Stay Awake can help your child practice staying awake for scans.

Camp Stay Awake

During Camp Stay Awake a child life specialist helps your child do a practice MRI scan. They use a "mock" (pretend) MRI scanner. Your child can hear the sounds and learn how it feels to lie in the scanner. It can help your child become comfortable with the scan.

Why stay awake?

Anesthesia is as safe as the care

team can make it. But, it is not risk free. Children who have anesthesia multiple times have a higher risk for thinking and learning problems. Keeping children awake for scans can decrease this risk.

Why have anesthesia for scans?

Anesthesia is medicine that can help your child sleep during a procedure. It helps young children lie still, so the scan images will be clear. For young children the risk of moving during scans is higher than the risks from anesthesia. To make sure the scans are accurate, young children often have anesthesia to keep them still.

What are the advantages of completing scans awake?

- Your child could avoid the health risks of anesthesia as well as risks

for thinking and learning.

- In most cases your child would be able to eat before the scan. However, sometimes your child would still need to be NPO (no food or drink) before some scans. You would receive those guidelines in advance.
- Your child could listen to a movie or music during most scans. Patients can watch movies during certain MRIs, CT scans and some nuclear medicine scans.
- Appointment times for scans would be shorter. Your child would not have evaluations before being sedated. And, no time would be needed in the recovery area.

Want to try awake scans?

Tell the doctor or child life specialist your child would like to try awake scans. The staff will arrange for you to meet with a child life specialist for Camp Stay Awake. If you are returning to St. Jude and would like your child to try an awake scan, call your clinic and ask to schedule a visit for Camp Stay Awake.

Your child will practice staying awake on the mock scanner. Then, the child life specialist will work with the medical team to help decide if your child is ready to try an awake scan.

Do you want to prepare your child at home for an upcoming scan? Talk to your child life specialist for more resources.

Certain scans could still require anesthesia. Sometimes, it depends on the way the scan is done or the length of the scan.

Your child will need to successfully complete an awake scan before being routinely scheduled awake for scans. A successful scan is one where your child's primary care team approves the image quality and your child was comfortable throughout the scan. After age 8, if your child has not had problems having scans awake, anesthesia and sedation will not be planned for scans.



This St. Jude teen shows how to properly wear the N-95 face mask

What face mask can my child wear?

Are all face masks the same? The answer is no. Masks have different levels of protection based on why they are being used. If your child has low white blood counts (neutropenia), an N-95 mask should be worn. The white "duck-bill" mask that St. Jude provides is an N-95 mask.

Some masks you can purchase might be more stylish. But, they do not provide your child with the best protection from airborne germs—mold and bacteria. They should not be used. The N-95 mask helps protect your child from germ particles.

Staff members have noticed some parents ordering their own masks for color, comfort or style. We understand your child wears the mask for a long time every day, and you may prefer a different mask. However, the St. Jude team wants to make sure your mask choice protects your child's health as well as possible.

You can simply use the white "duck bill" masks provided at St. Jude. If you choose to order special masks, please talk with your doctor or nurse first to make sure the masks you choose provide N-95 air filtering.

To get the best protection, change the N-95 face mask when wet, soiled or after one week of use. Handmade cloth masks do not provide good filter protection from bacteria and mold.





Talking about Medicines

Store medicines the right way

By Shane Cross, PharmD, Pharmaceutical Service

We've all heard how important it is to take medicines correctly. Their proper storage can be just as crucial. Medicines can lose their strength and not work as well if they are exposed to too much moisture, heat or sunlight. Be sure to store them in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.

Contrary to popular belief, bathroom medicine cabinets are not good places to store medicines. Bathrooms are too warm and humid.

Some other tips for storing medicines:

- Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.
- Store medicines in child-proof containers.
- If a medicine needs to be kept cold, store it on the top shelf of the refrigerator, out of sight from children.
- Check the expiration dates often, and discard anything that is out of date.

Do you have questions about the proper storage of medicines? Please ask your child's doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

SJTV launches

St. Jude recently launched a new, interactive television system for St. Jude patients and their families called **SJTV**. Along with many TV stations, the new system offers:

- Nearly 140 movies on demand;
- An education video library;
- Multiple information resources;
- A way to request services through the TV (inpatient);
- A circadian rhythm channel and a white noise channel;
- Music on demand, including a relaxation channel;
- Parental controls (inpatient);
- And much more.

The new **SJTV** brochures explain the remote controls and everything that is offered on the new TV system.

Prepare for Halloween fun

Halloween is like no other day on the calendar at St. Jude—a sweet collection of candy, creativity and fun. The hospital will celebrate Thursday, October 31, with the annual Halloween Trick-or-Treat event.

The candy carousel will begin at 1 p.m. at trick-or-treat stops in the Marlo Thomas Center; the Danny Thomas Research Center; Donald P. Pinkel, MD, Research Tower; Kay Kafe area; Chili's Care Center; and clinics throughout the Patient Care Center.

Pick up your bag anywhere along the route. There will be no starting point or lines this year. So, feel free to create your own route.

Employees will visit patients on the inpatient floors in two shifts to hand out goodies from 9:30–11:30 a.m. If you prefer no visitors during this time, please leave a bag on your door.

Here are some key things to remember for this year's Halloween celebration:

- All children and families planning to trick-or-treat that day must first stop and pick up a candy bag and a map of the trick-or-treat route. Locations will be posted closer to the date.
- To ensure the safety and security of all patients and families, only patients on active treatment and their siblings are invited to take part in the trick-or-treat festivities.
- Do not invite or bring outside friends or family.

St. Jude Parents is published on the first of each month by Patient Education and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.** To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Samantha Ransone, RN, PhD, at 901-595-3334 (ParentsNewsletter@stjude.org) or Lois Young (loislane.young@comcast.net). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter. St. Jude is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

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