

# Reducing the Pain in Childhood Vaccinations

We **strongly** encourage childhood vaccinations at the West Carleton Family Health Team. We wish to make these less painful for infants and children by recommending the following evidence based techniques. Our hope is for parents to work with us to achieve this goal.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS OF INFANTS AND CHILDREN

- Mothers can breastfeed their baby during vaccinations. If the baby cannot breastfeed, the administration of a sweet-tasting solution - like a bottle of sugar water OR a soother dipped in white table sugar - may also help to reduce pain.
- Parents can hold or cuddle their baby / child during vaccinations.
- Tactile stimulation (rubbing) at the injection site prior to and during injection results in less pain in infants, children, and even adults.
- Distraction during injections can help to reduce stress in children. Parents may bring a favourite book or toy to the well baby / child check-up. We have a few tricks which will also be available to the child.
- Topical anaesthetics - like Lidocaine-prilocaine 5% cream or patch (EMLA), Amethocaine 4% gel (Ametop) or Liposomal 4% cream (Maxilene) - are available over-the-counter at your pharmacy. (Please call to inform your Doctor if you require a prescription) One of these products can be applied to the injection site 20 to 60 minutes prior to the vaccination. Ensure the application site is completely covered to ensure the product is not wiped off or ingested accidentally. (please see the next page for vaccination injection sites)

**\*\* DO NOT** tell children “It won't hurt.” This has shown to be ineffective in reducing pain. **\*\***

**\*\* PLEASE DO NOT** give your infant / child fever reducing medication - like Tylenol, Tempra, or Advil -prior to immunizations until at least 4 hours after vaccinations if required. The administration of any of these products may reduce the level of disease-preventing antibodies produced in your infant / child's body after vaccination. **\*\***