4.6 Promote recovery and resilience

Children’s memories of painful experiences are strong predictors of subsequent reports of pain intensity [41]. Due to this, it is important to end a medical procedure positively. It is recommended that the procedural support team take steps to:

- Reduce the child’s distress before leaving the procedural setting
- Provide positive reinforcement of what went well during the medical procedure
- Promote appropriate rewards
- Ask if there is anything the child would like to try differently next time.
- Document the child’s response to the medical procedure and procedural preferences to help inform subsequent interventions.

Clinical tip

If a child requires procedural sedation, remember that due to the amnesic effects they may need to be debriefed and given factual information about the procedure.

4.6.1 When medical procedures do not go as planned

Signs that a medical procedure is not going to plan may include [10]:

- Suggestions to restrain a child
- Raised volume of voices
- Multiple members of the procedural support team attempting to lead.
- A visibly distressed child
- Distressed family members
- An attitude of ‘just do the procedure’

If a medical procedures does not go as planned ask yourself if you need to:

1. Rest
2. Reassess
3. Recover

Rest
For long and/or challenging medical procedure you may need to provide the child an opportunity to have a short rest during the medical procedure then continue as planned if the child is able to tolerate this.

**Reassess**

Assess the child’s level of procedural pain and pain-related distress

Link: pain assessment and measurement
http://www.rch.org.au/rchcpg/hospital_clinical_guideline_index/Pain_Assessment_and_Measurement/

Consider if the medical procedure is not going as planned due to the technical skill of the proceduralist, inadequate analgesia or inappropriate non-pharmacological strategies. What strategies can be added or changed to promote the comfort of the child?

**Recover**

Children may become so distressed during a medical procedure that they may require a longer period to recover. Vulnerable populations of children that may require special consideration for the length of recovery required are:

- Infants
- Children with poor physiological reserve ie. cardiac and respiratory conditions
- Unwell +/- unstable children

Ask yourself how urgent is the medical procedure and if there is a better way for the child.