

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Numbing Cream Instructions for Vaccines

Age: 3-year-old child and older

## What is numbing cream?

Numbing cream works on the skin's surface to block pain signals (topical anesthetic). It helps reduce pain during needle pokes like a vaccine.

## Why use numbing cream?

Numbing cream can help make visits for vaccines more comfortable and reduce pain. Using numbing cream may also help your child have a better experience at the doctor's office.

## Items to buy before the vaccine:

The items you need are available over the counter at the store. This means you do not need a prescription to buy them. Before your child's vaccine, purchase the following items at a store, pharmacy, or online:

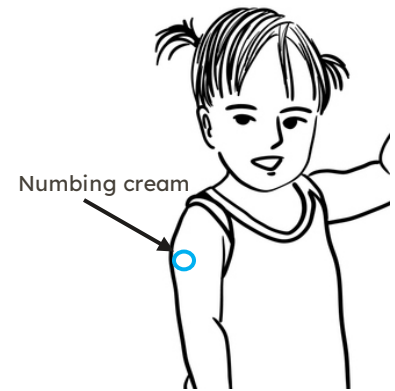
- Numbing cream: 4% lidocaine cream is available over the counter (no prescription needed). Brand-name and generic/store-brand versions are available. Ask a pharmacist if you need help choosing a product.
- Clear bandage: Cover the numbing cream so it stays in place and your child cannot touch it. You can use plastic wrap (such as cling wrap or Saran™ Wrap, Press' n Seal™, or a clear adhesive dressing, such as Tegaderm™).
- Gloves: You will need nitrile exam gloves.



## When and where to apply the cream:

If you are unsure, call your doctor's office before you put the cream on to pick the right place. For a vaccine, you will usually apply the cream to the outer part of the upper arm (deltoid). Place your first 3 fingers on the top part of your child's arm and use a pen to make a small dot just below your third finger. Apply the cream on the dot you made with the pen.

Your child's medical team will tell you if you should put cream on both deltoids (upper arms) if your child will receive more than 1 vaccine.



For a vaccine, you will usually apply the cream to the outer part of the upper arm (deltoid).

## How to apply the cream:

1. Wash your hands and put on gloves.
2. Apply the cream 30 to 60 minutes before your child's vaccine. Write down the time you apply the cream.
3. Apply the right amount of cream:
  - Dime-size if your child weighs less than 22 pounds (10 kg)
  - Quarter-size if your child weighs 22 pounds (10 kg) or more
4. Cover with the clear bandage or cling wrap. Do not press or rub in the cream. The cream works better in a thick layer.
5. If you use cling wrap, cut an 18 – 24-inch piece, the press n' seal helps cover the spot on the child's arm. so you can wrap it around your child's arm.
  - Check to be sure your child cannot touch the cream.
6. Take off your gloves and wash your hands.

## How long does the numbing last?

The cream begins to work in 30 to 60 minutes and lasts for 1 to 2 hours.

## Before the vaccine:

Your child's nurse or MA will remove the clear bandage and wipe off the cream.

## After the vaccine:

The spot where the cream was will stay numb for 1 to 2 hours.



## Important safety information:

Keep the cream out of reach of your child. Avoid contact with their eyes, nose, and mouth. Follow the instructions on the cream. If the cream oozes out from the clear bandage, wipe it off. Wash your hands with soap and water if you touch the cream. The skin turning pink or white is normal.

- Tell your child's medical team if your child is allergic to lidocaine before using this cream.
- Apply only the amount your child's medical team tells you. Using more than you are told can be harmful, especially for infants and young children.
- If your child has a severe reaction, such as trouble breathing, call 911 right away.
- If your child develops bluish-gray skin or you are concerned about an overdose, call Poison Control 1-800-222-1222.

## Now that you have read this:

- ☐ Tell your child's medical team where to apply the cream. (Check when done.)
- ☐ Tell your child's medical team how long to leave the cream on. (Check when done.)
- ☐ Tell your child's medical team how much to apply based on weight. (Check when done.)



## If you have any questions or concerns,

- ☐ Call your child's doctor or ☐ call \_\_\_\_\_

**If you want to know more about child health and illness, visit us at  
The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Thomas Campus**

1919 E. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85016 | 602-933-1400 | 866-933-6459 | [phoenixchildrens.org](http://phoenixchildrens.org)