

# Let's talk about...

**U.S. News  
"Best Children's  
Hospitals" rankings**

Ranked among the nation's best in five pediatric specialties



## Preparing Your Child for the Hospital

The hospital can be a stressful place for children. Preparing your child ahead of time can help anxiety and the transition from home to hospital.

### Some tips to keep in mind:

- Prepare yourself for the hospital stay and try to stay calm. Remember, children can sense stress in their caregiver.
  - Be honest with your child. Let them know why they will be staying in the hospital. Use language that fits your child's age and level of understanding.
  - Use children's books to help your child learn about the hospital.
  - Encourage your child to ask questions. This can help clear up any confusion your child may have.
  - Listen to your child and encourage them to express their thoughts and feelings.
  - Let your child know where you will be staying while they are at the hospital. For example, will you stay overnight, or do you need to go home?
  - If the hospital stay is planned, involve your child in packing.
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- Bring along comfort items from home, such as a favorite blanket, stuffed animal, or other favorite toy.
  - Bring photos of friends, family, and pets from home.
  - Encourage contact with friends and family members through phone or video calls.
  - Most children's hospitals have toys, movies, and other activities to provide to your child. Please let staff know if you are interested in these items.

**For more information or to connect with a Child Life Specialist, please visit: <http://ucdavis.health/childlife>**