



# How to hold your child during a vaccination

Comfort holds can help reduce stress and prevent movement while your child receives a vaccination. Along with distraction, telling stories, singing, or deep breathing, comfort holds can make vaccination easier.

**Below are some suggestions for how to hold your child. Your health care provider may suggest a different hold when giving a vaccine.**

## Cuddle hold for infants

- Hold your child on your lap sitting sideways.
- Tuck your child's inside arm against your chest OR under your armpit with hug-like pressure.
- Securely hold your child's outside arm and outside leg.
- Slightly bend your child's outside knee. This helps relax the thigh muscle.



## Side comfort hold for toddlers

- Hold your child on your lap sitting sideways.
- Tuck your child's inside arm against your chest OR under your armpit and behind your back. Add gentle pressure between your back and the back of the chair.
- Wrap your arm around your child's back and securely hold your child's torso and outside arm close to your body.
- Use your other arm to hold your child's forearm firmly against their stomach.
- Anchor your child's legs between your thighs.



## Chest to chest (straddle or hug) comfort hold

- Have your child sit on your lap facing you and wrap your child's legs around your waist.
- Wrap your arms around the child's lower back.
- Wrap your child's arms around your waist and hold them firmly under your arms.
- Your child can put their head on your shoulder and turn their head away from the procedure.
- If your child's arm reaches all the way behind you, lightly press their arm against the back of the chair.



## Back to chest (front) comfort hold

- Hold your child on your lap facing away from you as you sit.
- Embrace your child during the process, crossing your arms in front of the child holding their right forearm with your left hand and their left forearm with your right hand.
- Anchor both of your child's legs between your thighs and cross your legs over your child's.
- Watch out for your child's head so it doesn't hit your face if they move.



## Chest to chest (straddle or hug) comfort hold

- Have your child sit on your lap facing you and wrap your child's legs around your waist.
- Wrap your arms around the child's lower back.
- Wrap your child's arms around your waist and hold them firmly under your arms.
- Your child can put their head on your shoulder and turn their head away from the procedure.
- If your child's arms reach all the way behind you, press lightly against the back of the chair.



## Side comfort hold

- Have your child sit on your lap sideways.
- Wrap your child's arm closest to you around your back and press lightly against the back of the chair.
- Wrap your arm around the child's back and hold the upper arm.
- Use the other hand to hold the forearm and legs.



## Side by side comfort hold

- Sit next to your child and wrap your arm around their shoulders.
- Hold them close to you.
- Wrap your child's arm around your back and press lightly against the back of the chair.
- Hold their forearm across your body.

