


Let's talk about...

Children Visiting the Hospital

Preparing your child for a hospital visit is important so they know what to expect. Before you go, talk to the patient's bedside nurse to ensure a visit is okay. The nurse may also provide information to better plan the visit.

Some tips to keep in mind:

- **Ask what they know:** Find out what your child already understands about why the person is in the hospital.
 - **Describe the hospital:** Tell them what they might see, smell, or hear so they aren't surprised.
 - **Show a picture:** Show your child a photo of the person in the hospital before the visit. This helps them better understand the situation and ask questions early.
 - **Bring activities:** Pack familiar things like books and art supplies so they have activity options while visiting.
 - **Watch for signs:** Look for signs that your child is nervous, like crossing their arms or backing away. Have them share (aloud or with a pre-planned signal) when they would like to leave the room for a break.
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- The image shows a female doctor with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a white lab coat and a stethoscope, holding a pink folder. She is standing in a hospital hallway and talking to a woman with long dark hair wearing a light blue top and a patterned skirt. The woman is holding the hand of a young girl with long dark hair, wearing a red top and a blue skirt, who is also holding a small orange bag. They are all looking towards the right side of the frame.
- **It's okay for them to change their mind:** Remind your child they can change their mind about visiting at any time.
 - **Talk about it after:** After the visit, talk about how it went. Making art or playing can help them process their feelings.

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