

# Creating positive healthcare experiences

Issued by [Intercare](#)

1 May 2021

Children don't necessarily look forward to going to a doctor or dentist. Consider these steps for putting their anxiety at ease - as well as yours.



**Start young.** The first years set the stage for healthy habits for the rest of your child's life. It's never too early to start. If you take your toddler to visit a doctor and dentist for check-ups and well-child visits (when they are healthy and not sick or feeling unwell), it creates positive experiences making any "sick" visits easier and less stressful. A long-term relationship with your doctor and dentist is essential for your family's current and future health.

**Choose a child-friendly doctor and dentist.** Find a healthcare professional you and your child trust and feel comfortable with. This way, you can be confident that your child is getting the best care possible.



**Prepare your child for what to expect.** As soon as your child can understand, talk to them about what may happen during the visit. Explain the healthcare team to them, i.e., doctors, dentists, nurses, reception staff, you, other family members—and themselves, of course.

**Plan a rewarding experience.** Incentivise your child for good behaviour at the doctor or dentist. If they have something positive to look forward to after the visit, they will most likely be less anxious during the check-up. That is why Intercare rewards children who visit our healthcare professionals with Star Certificates.

**Be calm.** Children imitate their parents, so it is important to set a good example. While it is natural to feel nervous when your child is, your child likely senses your energy. If you are calm and comfortable, they are more likely to mirror those feelings.

At Intercare, we have doctors and dentists with a particular interest in children's health and dental care. They are experienced and competent; they understand children's needs and fears and communicate easily with them in a friendly manner. They use the following child-friendly strategies:

- Communicates with your child, even if your child is a newborn.
- Understands your child's development and be sensitive to your child's needs.
- Understands how stressful things can be and assists you in feeling confident to look after your sick child at home.
- Recognise the good things you're doing as a parent.

By creating positive healthcare experiences, both child and parent can benefit from the improved patient outcome.

## Sources:

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