



# Research Article *of the Month*

Gates M, et al. **Digital technology distraction for acute pain in children: a meta-analysis.** Pediatrics 2020;145(2):e20191139.

## *In a Nutshell:*

**When children use digital technology for distraction during painful procedures, their pain and distress may be reduced compared to usual care.**

Distraction is one strategy to reduce children's procedural pain and anxiety. Non-digital forms of distraction such as blowing bubbles or reading a story have often been used to help manage children's procedural pain and distress. Given how frequently children have access to and use technology, this study aimed to determine the effectiveness of digital technology distraction to reduce children's pain and distress.

**Distraction with digital technology may help reduce pain and anxiety during procedures**



## *The Details:*

**This meta-analysis on the effects of digital technology distraction on children's procedural pain and distress sought to determine the effectiveness of digital technology distraction compared to usual care and non-digital distraction.**

This study found that **digital technology distraction may reduce a children's procedural pain and distress by a moderate and clinically important amount compared to usual care.** This reduction in pain and distress was found both through children's self-report and observer report.

**It is currently unclear whether digital technology distraction is more effective than non-technology distraction during painful procedures.**

This study supports other reviews that have found distraction to be an effective way to reduce children's procedural pain and distress. Healthcare organizations may wish to consider offering digital technology distraction, as it requires little provider training and multiple distraction options in one device (i.e., different games and videos), and is easy to clean.

