

institutions have limited facilities. No matter what the institution provides for children, nurses can include play activities as part of nursing care. Play can be used to teach, express feelings, or achieve a therapeutic goal. Consequently, it should be included in preparing children for and encouraging their cooperation during procedures. Play sessions after procedures can be structured, such as directed toward needle play, or general, with a wide variety of equipment available for children to play with.

Routine procedures such as measuring blood pressure and oral administration of medication may be of concern to children. [Box 20-1](#) describes suggestions for incorporating play into nursing procedures and activities for the hospitalized child that facilitate learning and adjustment to a new situation.

Box 20-1

Play Activities for Specific Procedures

Fluid Intake

Make ice pops using child's favorite juice.

Cut gelatin into fun shapes.

Make a game out of taking a sip when turning page of a book or in games, such as Simon Says.

Use small medicine cups; decorate the cups.

Color water with food coloring or powdered drink mix.

Have a tea party; pour at a small table.

Let child fill a syringe and squirt it into mouth or use it to fill small decorated cups.

Cut straws in half and place in a small container (much easier for child to suck liquid).

Use a “crazy” straw.