

Unrelieved pain may lead to potential long-term physiologic, psychosocial, and behavioral consequences. Improving pain management requires a multifactorial approach encompassing education, institutional support, attitude shifts, and change leaders (Twycross, 2010). Nonpharmacologic interventions and adequate pain medications are both essential to providing optimal pain management.

Nonpharmacologic Management

Pain is often associated with fear, anxiety, and stress. A number of nonpharmacologic techniques, such as distraction, relaxation, guided imagery, and cutaneous stimulation, can help with pain control (see [Nursing Care Guidelines](#) box). It is also important to provide coping strategies that help reduce pain perception, make pain more tolerable, decrease anxiety, and enhance the effectiveness of analgesics or reduce the dosage required.

Nursing Care Guidelines

Nonpharmacologic Strategies for Pain Management

General Strategies

Consult child-life specialist.

Use nonpharmacologic interventions to supplement, not replace, pharmacologic interventions, and use for mild pain and pain that is reasonably well controlled with analgesics.

Form a trusting relationship with child and family.

Express concern regarding their reports of pain and intervene appropriately.

Take an active role in seeking effective pain management strategies.

Use general guidelines to prepare child for procedure.

Prepare child before potentially painful procedures, but avoid