

RSAC Tips: Doctor Visits

Getting a checkup or having a medical procedure can be an intimidating and overwhelming experience for any child. As with many other outings that only happen a few times a year, preparation is key.

Get information ahead of time.

Know your doctor's waiting room and mask policies before you arrive, so that you know what to expect. Especially during the pandemic, policies and procedures are likely to be different from what you've previously experienced.

Focus on communication.

Tell the nurse, dentist, or doctor working with your child about how your child best communicates, including how your child expresses that he or she needs a break. It is also very beneficial if the provider can show the tools to your child and explain what they are doing before they do anything.

Scheduled breaks can be helpful.

If your provider is open to it, many kids do very well with scheduled breaks during the medical/dental procedure. For example, your child might have her teeth cleaned by a hygienist for 60 seconds, and then get a 30 second break. Although it seems that this may slow down the overall process, it often makes the experience more tolerable for everyone involved and doesn't take more time in the long run.

Take notes on how the visit went.

After your visit, it's a great idea to jot down a few notes of what worked especially well. You can share these with your provider, or use the notes to jog your memory for your next scheduled visit.

Questions to Ask when Calling Ahead of Time:

- What is your mask policy for adults? For children?
- What can my child have with him during the visit? (for example, is it ok if he watches an iPad the entire time, or will he need to have it taken away?)
- Where will be asked to wait?
- If it's noisy or overwhelming, is there an alternative, quieter area we can go to for a break?

Want More Details?

Visit rollins.college/autismsupport to sign up for our email list, download other tips sheets, or request more caregiver support.

Rollins
SUPPORT FOR AUTISM
CAREGIVERS

✉ rsac@rollins.edu