

Planning for Good Visits to the Doctor

What you and your doctor can do to help the visit go smoother:

Prepare the exam room

Nurse/Medical Assistant can check in advance with the parent regarding room accommodations. These may include:

- Quiet room
- Room without a window
- No bright lights
- No music

If necessary remove all objects that could potentially be used as missiles or weapons.



Minimize waiting time if possible

Consider:

Scheduling the child as the first appointment of the day (ten minutes earlier will prevent the child from seeing other people when he arrives).

Potential advantages:

Minimizes risk of:

1. Child "melt-down".
2. Disruption for other families in the Waiting Room.
3. Embarrassment for the parent.
4. Damage to the actual Waiting Room.

If possible register the child in advance by telephone.



Be alert for your own safety

Some children with autism may not understand that you are there to help them, instead they may see you as a threat. They can be calm at one moment and erupt the next and may:

- Head-butt
- Bite
- Kick
- Spit
- Punch
- Pull hair



Respect the child's personal space (it may be much larger than usual).

Source: *Help Autism Now*, at www.helpautismnow.com