

DRAWING BLOOD IN CHILDREN WITH PWS

Individuals with Prader-Willi syndrome may have difficulties with blood draws. The hypotonia and increased subcutaneous fat may make finding landmarks more difficult for the phlebotomist. These are some hints that may help.



- 1) If your child has had difficulty in the past with blood draws, warn the lab tech that an experienced person will be needed because your child is a "hard stick." The usual guideline is that the phlebotomist should try twice. If he or she is unsuccessful after two tries; then someone else should try. Do not be afraid to ask up front for the most experienced individual. That individual may not be present at the time, so depending on what labs are needed, you might ask if the blood draw can be postponed until that person is present.

In most children's hospitals, the phlebotomist would have the most experience with little children. On occasion the parents might wish to ask for a neonatal nurse to come down for the draw. In smaller hospitals, the parents might be able to request a pediatric/newborn nurse, who may have more experience than the phlebotomist, and the hospital may be better able to comply with that request.

- 2) Request a prescription from your doctor for EMLA cream to help numb the area. EMLA should be placed on the skin 45 minutes prior to lab draw.
- 3) Give your child plenty to drink several hours before the visit to the hospital/doctor. If the weather is cold, bundle them warmly on the way for the blood draw. Ask for warm packs to place on the blood draw site.