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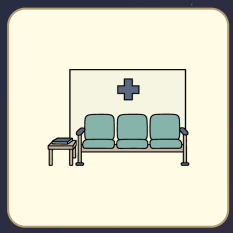
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Healthcare and environment

A healthcare visit has to happen, money or no money. And most sensory load can be removed for free.

Five ways to reduce sensory load before a visit p. 2

Environment checklist p. 3




This is yours. You do not need an account, an email address or money. Print the pages you need, and pass it on if it helps someone.

HEALTHCARE · W.H.I.C.H.

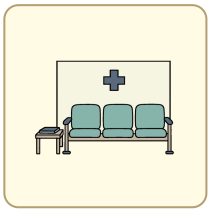
Five ways to reduce sensory load

A clinic is a heavy sensory environment from the moment you walk in: lights, sounds, smells, strangers and waiting. Most of the load can be eased in advance.

Who it is for: families and support workers preparing a visit to the doctor, the dentist or for blood tests.

1 Book the first appointment of the day

The wait is shortest and the waiting room emptiest. Ask at the same time whether you can wait in the car and come in when called.



2 Tell them about needs in advance

Ring or write before the visit: what is overwhelming, how the person communicates and what helps. Staff can act well when they know.



3 Go through the place beforehand

A photo of the clinic, a short visit beforehand or an illustrated narrative of how the visit goes makes the situation predictable.



4 Reduce what you can

Ear defenders, sunglasses or a cap, familiar clothes. One less source of load can make the whole visit work.



5 Keep the rest of the day light

Leave shopping and visits for another day. The nervous system needs room to recover, or the cost comes in the evening.



TAKE WITH YOU

- [ ] Ear defenders or headphones
- [ ] A favourite drink or snack
- [ ] A familiar comforting object
- [ ] A list of medication and previous visits

Remember: a cancelled visit gives you useful information: next time, more preparation is needed. If you suspect pain or illness, the visit still goes ahead.

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SENSORY ENVIRONMENT · W.H.I.C.H.

Environment checklist

A quick audit: look around you before you react.

Date: **Room:** **Time:**

SOUNDS



- [ ] Background noise: radio, TV, talking, traffic?
- [ ] Devices: air conditioning, fridge, fluorescent lights?
- [ ] Sudden sounds: doorbell, phone, alarms?
- [ ] Does the room echo?

Action: .....

LIGHTS



- [ ] Fluorescent lighting: is it flickering?
- [ ] Direct sunlight in the eyes?
- [ ] Too bright or too dim?
- [ ] Reflections on screens?

Action: .....

SMELLS



- [ ] Cleaning products or disinfectants?
- [ ] Perfumes, deodorants?
- [ ] Food smells from the kitchen or packed lunches?
- [ ] A smell of mould or damp?

Action: .....

PEOPLE AND SPACE



- [ ] How many people are in the room?
- [ ] Is there somewhere to withdraw to?
- [ ] Is it crowded or spacious?
- [ ] New people: a substitute, a visitor?

Action: .....

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



- [ ] Temperature: too hot or too cold?
- [ ] Are the seats comfortable?
- [ ] Ventilation: is the air stuffy?
- [ ] Clothes: materials, tightness?

Action: .....

ROUTINE AND ANTICIPATION



- [ ] Is the daily schedule visible?
- [ ] Is anything unusual happening today?
- [ ] Were transitions announced in advance?
- [ ] Are communication tools to hand?

Action: .....

Educational support material. It does not replace healthcare or therapy. Rule out physical causes and consult a professional when needed. Change the environment first.

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