

CARING FOR THE AUTISTIC PEDIATRIC PATIENT

Appointments

- Allow clients to schedule an informal trip to familiarize themselves with the settings
- Double book appointments for time if necessary
- Give the first or last appointment of the day
- Allow for private small rooms, if possible

Medical Procedures of Physical Examinations

- Always explain everything *before* the examination
- Show pictures when possible
- Explain what you're doing and why
- Enlist parents or caregivers with assistance

Language

- Use simple language with short sentences
- Make language concrete and avoid idioms, irony or metaphors
- Give direct requests
- Check to make sure they understood instructions
- Ask for vital information

Response From The Patient

- Don't be surprised by lack of eye contact
- Allow the patient extra time to process information
- Don't assume a non-verbal patient doesn't understand
- Some autistic patients don't understand personal space - they may invade yours

Sensory Stimuli

- Some patients are sensitive to light
- Pen lights can trigger seizures in some patients
- Some patients can become sensory overloaded
- Some patients may withdraw due to sensory overload

Pain

- Some autistic patients have a high pain threshold
- Some patients are over or under sensitive to pain
- Some may react and appear extremely distressed
- It is advisable to use anesthetic creams when possible