

Appendix A: Agitation Prevention Strategies

The Agitation Continuum: It is easier to engage when someone is calm than when someone is escalated. Proactively identifying triggers and helpful interventions can provide a helpful framework.



Ask Before it's a Problem:

- For ALL patients at risk for agitation, when obtaining a history, ask:
 - What is your preferred method of communication?
 - What do you enjoy doing?
 - What helps you feel calm?
 - What happens when you feel upset or anxious?
 - What helps you when you feel upset or anxious?
 - What happens when you feel angry?
 - What helps you when you feel angry?
- Consider filling “Getting to Know Me” document ([Appendix E](#)) and developing a daily schedule in collaboration with Child Life ([Appendix F](#))
- Document a plan for agitation

Be Proactive with Communication:

- Engage caregivers early and often
 - What triggers anxiety/agitation/escalation?
 - What signs/symptoms indicate escalation?
 - What prn interventions/prn meds have worked in the past?
- Set clear expectations for the admission
- Discuss exams, procedures, and interventions before they occur
- Offer choice and control when possible
- Strategize with nursing staff and Child Life staff
- Collaborate with Consultation & Liaison (C&L) Psychology/Psychiatry
- Become familiar with [Appendix B: Verbal and Behavioral Deescalation Strategies](#)



RETURN TO
THE BEGINNING

