

# The experience of control related to the procedure of non-pharmacologic pain management in paediatric oncology and heamatology

Stefano Capretto\*, Giancarlo Izzi\*\*, Corrado Vecchi\*

\*Coop. Sociale Le Mani Parlanti, Parma - Italy; \*\*Department of Paediatrics and Onco-Hematology, University Hospital of Parma - Italy

## Objectives:

- ▶ Give information and instruments to patients, from 0 to 18 years old, undergoing invasive painful medical procedures (ex. Lumbar puncture, bone marrow aspiration) suitable to conduct non-pharmacologic techniques to control anxiety, fear and pain (distraction, relaxation, hypnosis and guided imagery);
- ▶ Unite patients and parents to become active subjects in medical treatments;
- ▶ Create an environment where the child and his family can find help and comfort

## Method:

This type of intervention is carried out with the collaboration of the paediatric medical staff and four specialists in play and imaginative techniques.

The project has two different procedures:

- invasive procedures (lumbar puncture, bone marrow aspiration) undertaken by specialists;
- medication and “standard” injection undertaken only by the medical staff.

We use different non-pharmacologic techniques:

- Distraction (books, soap bubbles, puppets, music, videogames)
- Guided imagery (favourite place, imaginary trip, magic glove)

We collect information “self-report” about the child, valuation of his distress and about his behaviour before and after the procedure with behavioural checklists.

## Results:

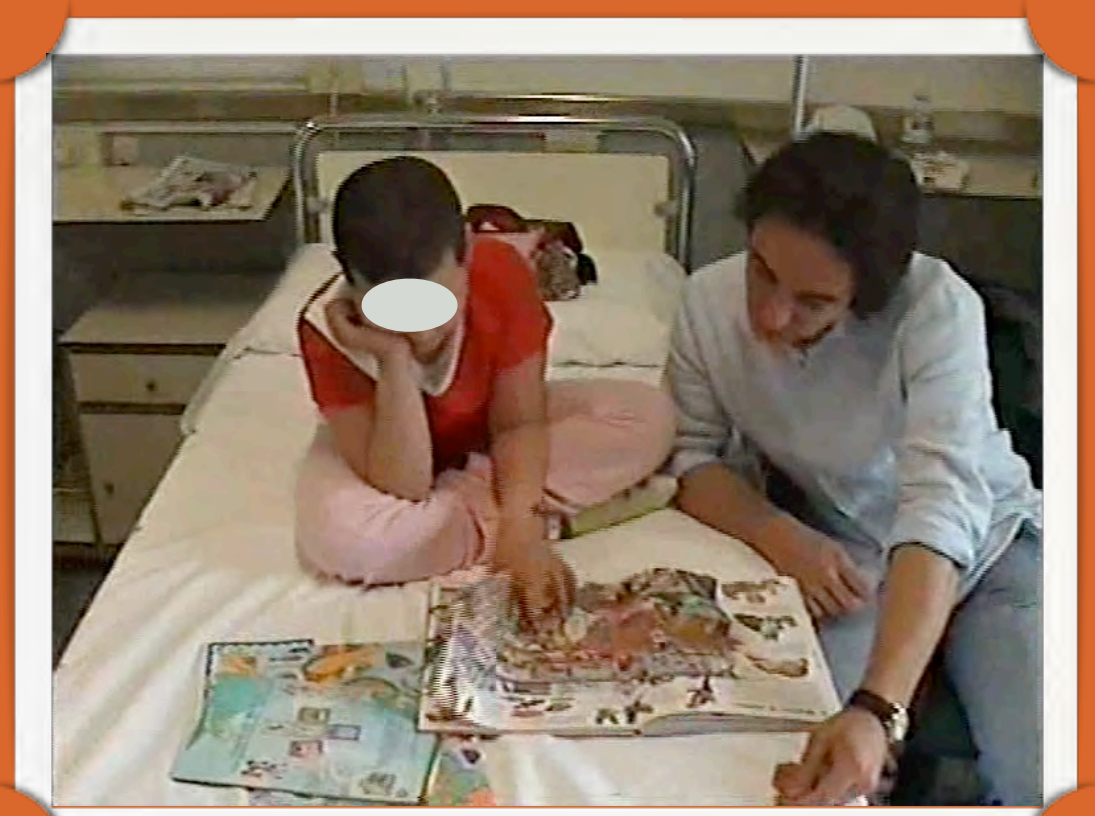
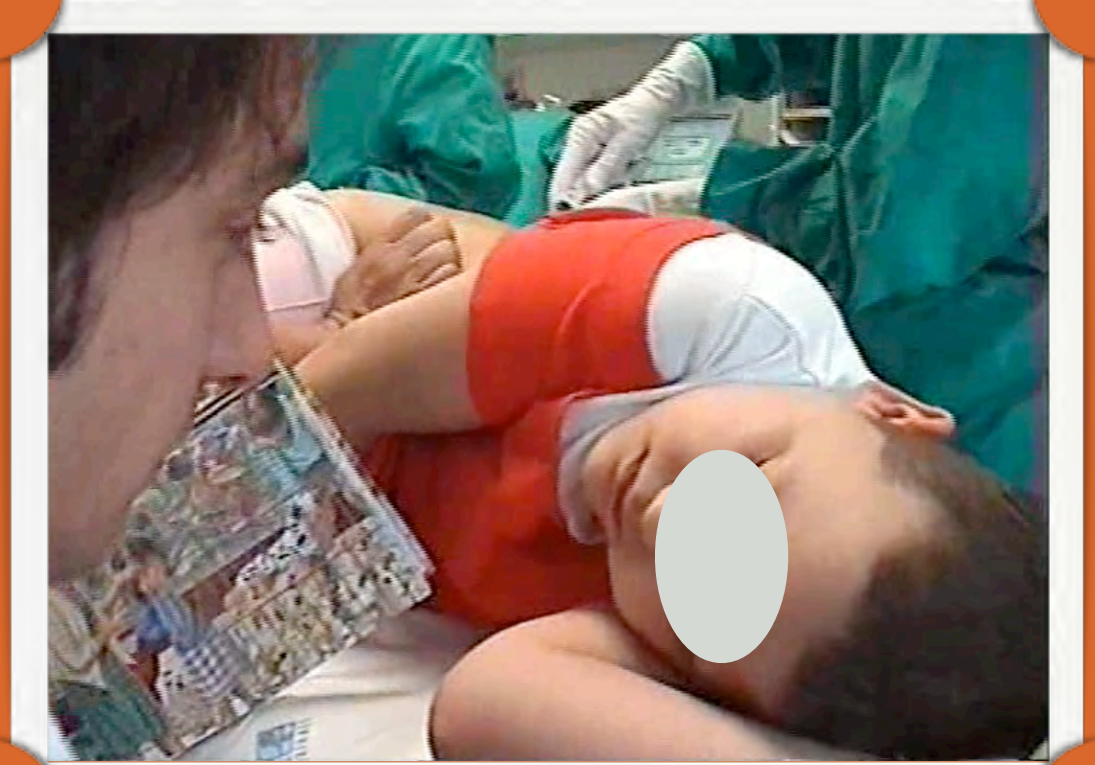
From 2005 until 2009 we have carried out

532  
procedures

with non-pharmacologic  
pain management

Behavioral checklist data have shown low anticipatory anxiety before invasive procedures and self-report data highlight that distress perception is very low.

We noticed a decreasing distress in children undergoing repeated procedures and a better “awakening” from sedation that was used when the anesthetist believed it was necessary, rather than children that didn’t undergo the procedure with non-pharmacologic techniques.



## Conclusions:

The techniques related to a non-pharmacologic pain management procedure are associated to an adequate pharmacological pain control, became very important to control invasive procedures in paediatric oncology; children have shown low distress levels and seems to be decreasing the impact that those procedures could have in the hospitalization life of our little patients.

The use of non-pharmacological pain control techniques didn’t hamper the hospital organization and the anesthetists job.