Numbing Cream

What is numbing cream?
It is a type of cream to put on a small area of skin to make it numb. It is absorbed into the skin and numbs the nerve endings in the area to help decrease your child’s pain. Numbing cream may be called EMLA® cream.

It is used to decrease the pain from accessing ports, starting IV’s, or blood draws. It may be used in procedures such as lumbar punctures, bone marrow aspirations, and shots. This cream works like Novocain® at the dentist’s office.

How to Apply the Cream
• Apply a large dollop, at least the size of a quarter, of numbing cream on the skin to be numbed.
• Do not rub the cream in.
• Cover the area with a plastic, non-stick dressing. You may hear it called Press’n Seal®.
• Numbing cream will begin to numb the site within 15 minutes after it is applied. However, it will take at least 60 minutes to provide pain relief. You may leave it on up to 4 hours for children 3 months of age and older (1 hour for children under 3 months).
• You will know it is working if your child’s skin starts to feel numb (child does not pull away when you touch the spot with your fingernail).
• Wipe off the numbing cream with a clean cloth before the procedure. Numbing cream will still work for 1 to 2 hours after it has been removed.
• Be careful not to get the numbing cream on your hands. If you do, wash them right away to be sure that your hands don’t become numb.

Side Effects
• Numbing cream may sometimes cause side effects such as redness or paleness of the area where the cream was used.
• The skin may itch where the numbing cream was placed. This should go away in 2 hours.
• Call your child’s doctor if they are having any side effects that continue or are very bothersome.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.