

# Biofeedback relaxation app may help kids during medical procedures

April 19 2018

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A new *Pain Practice* study indicates that biofeedback-assisted relaxation may help manage pain and anxiety in children undergoing medical procedures.

BrightHearts is a biofeedback mediation relaxation app designed for mobile phones and tablet computers that responds to changes in heart rate and can be used to teach children biofeedback assisted relaxation.

In the study of 30 children aged 7 to 18 years undergoing a medical procedure (peripheral blood collection, [botulinum toxin injections](#), or intravenous cannula insertion), BrightHearts was acceptable to patients, their parents, and their [healthcare providers](#). The pilot study also demonstrated that the use of BrightHearts did not impede the administration of [medical procedures](#) and in some cases was perceived to facilitate the procedure. The majority of patients, parents and healthcare providers indicated that they would use BrightHearts again during a procedure.

"BrightHearts taps into children's interest in devices like smart phones and tablets," said co-author Dr. Angela Morrow, of The Children's Hospital at Westmead and the University of Sydney, in Australia.

"Biofeedback is a modality that we hope will empower children and help them to manage their pain and anxiety without the need for medications."

**More information:** Karen L.O. Burton et al, The Feasibility of Using

the BrightHearts Biofeedback-Assisted Relaxation Application for the Management of Pediatric Procedural Pain: A Pilot Study, *Pain Practice* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/papr.12696](https://doi.org/10.1111/papr.12696)

Provided by Wiley

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