It is well documented throughout the literature that the insertion of a needle is one of the most frightening and distressing medical procedures experienced by children (1,3,8). Reducing this fear is an important part of the children’s nurses’ role; as negative experiences can lead to needle phobia and long-term traumatic memories (12). Historically some would argue that pharmacological interventions such as topical anaesthetics have been used with limited success due to their cost and lengthy time required for the analgesic to take effect (5,9,11,14,17). Recently papers have emerged in the literature promoting the benefits of combining non-pharmacological methods with current pharmacological methods (2,4,13,16).

Pharmacological vs Non-Pharmacological

Various methods of reducing pain are available to the healthcare practitioner including pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic. To date, no single topical analgesic has gained universal usage due to their varied effectiveness, cost, and duration of application (11,14). These limitations pose particular problems in Emergency Departments (10).

Non-pharmacological methods of reducing pain have become increasingly popular:

**Physical:** massage, valsalva maneuver and counter-stimulation.

**Behavioural:** music distraction, watching cartoons & communication (4,16).

Opinion is also divided over how painful venepuncture is for a child, however it is well documented that the procedure can be highly stressful and traumatic (14). Whilst we cannot dispute that topical anaesthetics are effective at reducing the pain associated with venepuncture, other studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of play therapy in reducing associated stress (2). More recently there has been a call for a combined approach to address both problems (13).

“The Buzzy Device”

- Uses external cold and vibration to provide a combined approach to tackling pain and pre-procedural stress (2).

Benefit to Patient:
- Reduces both pain and anxiety
- Time efficient
- Can be used for injections as well as cannulation/venepuncture.

Benefit to Health Care Provider:
- Offers Significant Cost Savings
- More time efficient
- Reusable
- Reduced Vasoconstriction