

Canine Visitation (Pet) Therapy Pilot Data on Decreases in Child Pain Perception. Elisa J. Sobo, PhD, San Diego State University, Brenda Eng, RN, MN, CPNP, Children's Hospital and Health Center, Nadine Kassity-Krich, MBA, BSN, RN, Contemplative Care Consultants. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, Vol. 24, (1) 2006: 51-57

To explore the effectiveness of canine visitation therapy (CVT) in pediatric pain management in a tertiary care children's hospital, a descriptive pilot study was conducted. Method A convenience sample of 25 English-speaking children ages 5 to 18 years who underwent surgery and experienced acute postoperative pain participated in a standard, one-time CVT intervention. Each child completed a pre-post survey and a post intervention interview. Findings: Quantitative pre-post findings indicate that CVT significantly reduced perceived pain. Qualitative findings suggest that one mechanism that makes CVT effective may be cognitive. That is, CVT distracts children from pain-related cognition and possibly activates comforting thoughts regarding companionship or home. Conclusion: The study findings suggest that CVT may be a useful adjunct to traditional pain management for children. Nurses may better serve their patients when CVT is an option.