

# Little Labby at the Laboratory

*Blood test and electrocardiogram*



An illustration of a scene in a bedroom. A small yellow dog with brown spots and a blue bow is lying in a bed with a red pillow and a grey blanket, looking sad. A larger yellow dog is sitting on the edge of the bed, looking at the smaller dog. A string of colorful triangular bunting hangs from the top left. A small orange dog is peeking out from behind the bed's footboard.

**Daddy, I feel nervous  
of the latorabory!**

Little Labby is sad. She is sick and feeling down.  
Daddy pets the soft cheek of his darling.

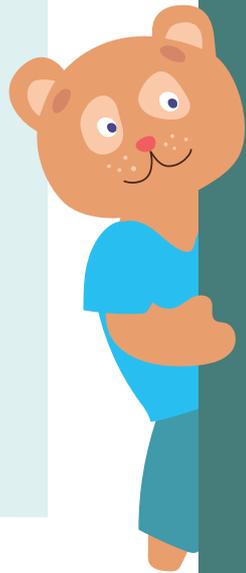
– You will feel better after the tests  
because then we will know why you feel  
bad, Daddy comforts Little Labby.

Little Labby is nervous. What is a laboratory and  
what do they do there?

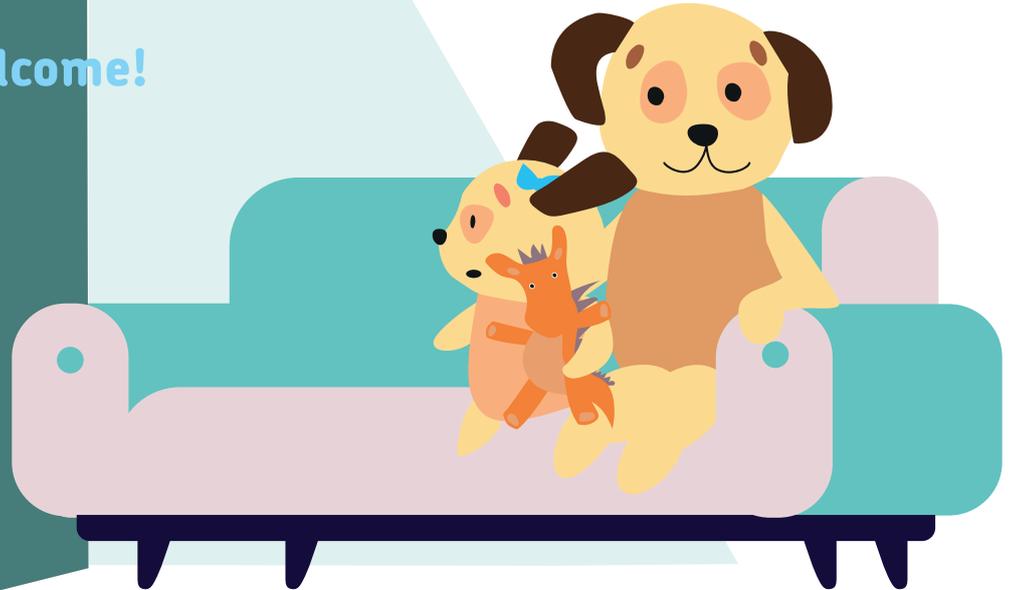
– A laboratory is a place where  
nurses do blood tests and draw an  
electrocardiogram. The tests will tell  
us if you are sick and need medicine,  
Daddy explains.

Little Labby is waiting for her turn. She feels safe next to Daddy. Little Labby's friend, Dragon the Plushie, wanted to tag along because it too wants to see the laboratory. Dragon the Plushie is a little nervous, so Little Labby hugs him tightly.

Soon a smiling face appears behind the door.  
– Welcome to the blood test, Little Labby!



Welcome!





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Little Labby sits down in the blood sampling chair and looks around. There are so many interesting things in the room!

– Let's put this elastic band called tourniquet around your paw. It can feel a little tight. The tourniquet makes your veins more visible, the nurse says and wipes the sample collection site with a small pad.

The nurse shows the needle that he will use to take the sample. Little Labby is now very nervous. Daddy takes Little Labby's paw and whispers:

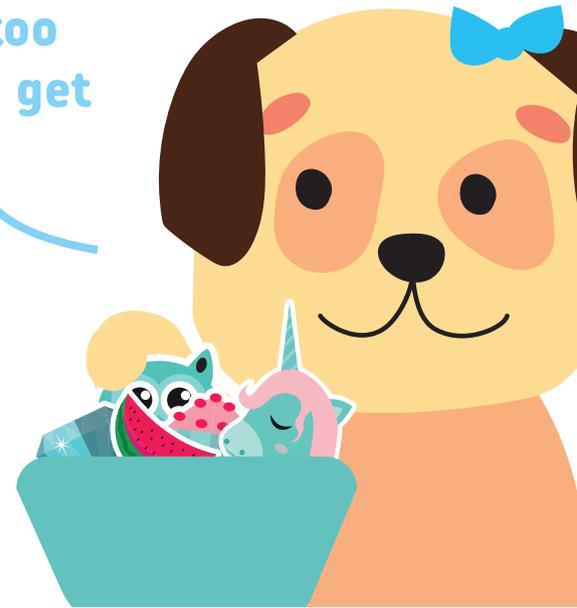
– It will be alright, sweetheart.

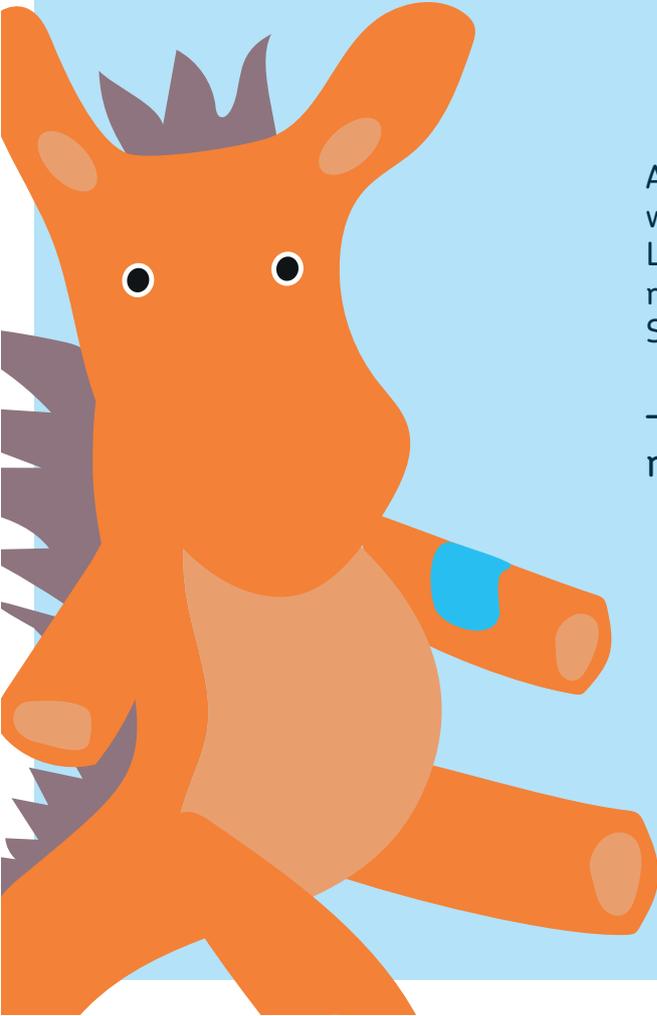
Little Labby squeezes her eyes shut. She feels a small sting in her arm. Then Little Labby waits – but there is no more pain. Little Labby peeks and sees that the small sample tube is filled with red liquid.

– You are so brave, Little Labby! Well done! Now, I'm going to cover the injection site with a small pad, the nurse smiles.

The sample has been taken. It stung a little but was over quickly. Little Labby gets a sticker as a memory of the new experience and her bravery.

**Dragon the Plushie too wants to get tested!**





After the blood test, Little Labby goes to the next waiting room with Daddy. Daddy says that soon Little Labby can relax on the treatment table in the ECG room. Little Labby laughs. You cannot relax on a table! Silly Daddy.

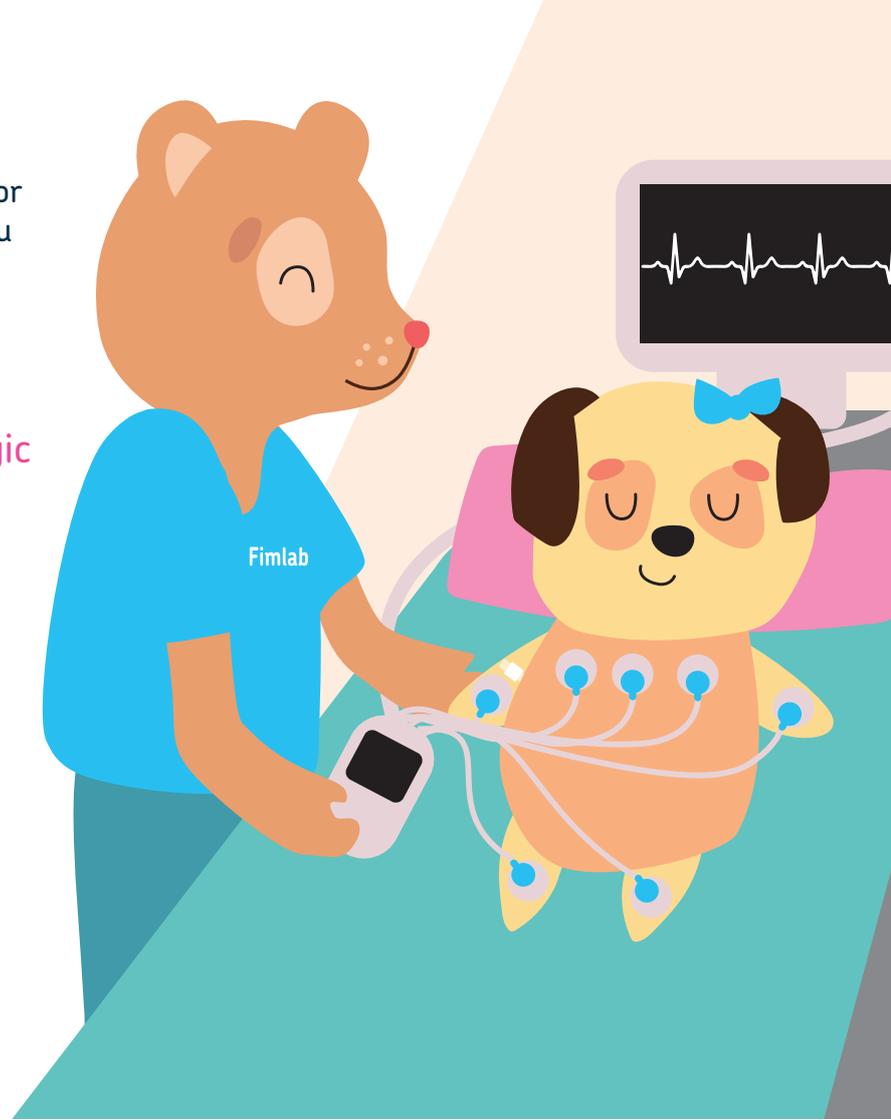
– Daddy, Dragon the Plushie is no longer nervous, says Little Labby.

**Brave Dragon!**

– Hello, Little Labby! I see you have been waiting a little while, so now you are ready for the electrocardiogram. Let's see how well you can relax, the nurse says.

Well, the nurse is in for a surprise – Little Labby is the master of relaxation! Just a little spark of magic and wow, she can now be called Laid-back Labby.

Little Labby follows closely when the nurse attaches stickers to her chest, wrists and ankles. When the stickers are in place, wires are connected to them.





Budum, budum, beats Little Labby's heart. The electrocardiogram, or ECG, monitors Little Labby's heart and draws a diagram of her heartbeat on the machine screen. A doctor will analyse the diagram drawn by the pulse to see whether the heart is working correctly.

– Good job staying still! the nurse praises Little Labby and removes the stickers attached to her body.

Before Little Labby leaves the examination room, the nurse gives her something.

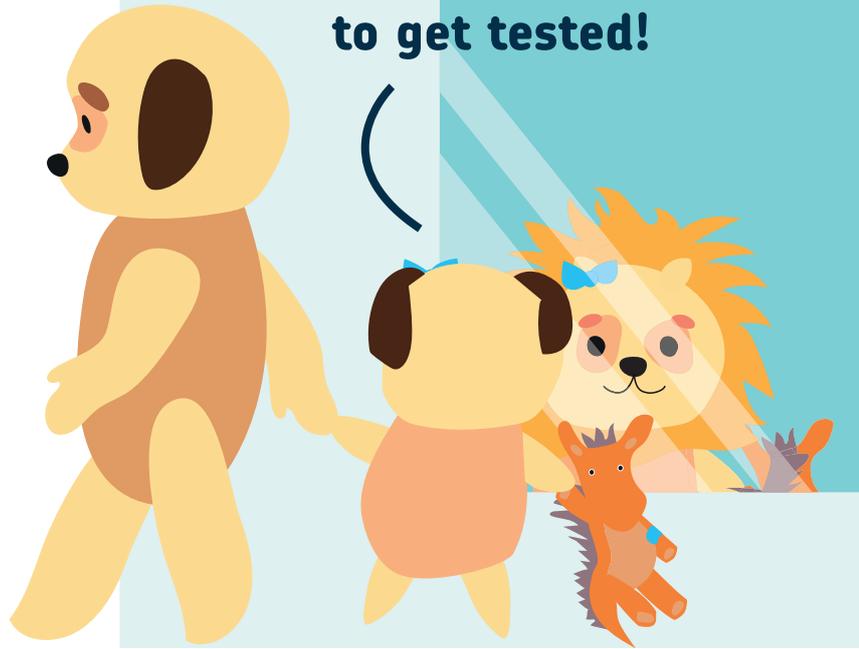
– You can choose any sticker you like as a memory of this visit.

Little Labby's exciting laboratory adventure was over in a flash. Happy Little Labby is proud of her new experiences, the plaster and stickers, and the nurses' praises. She feels like a majestic lion.

– Daddy, what happens next?  
Little Labby is curious.

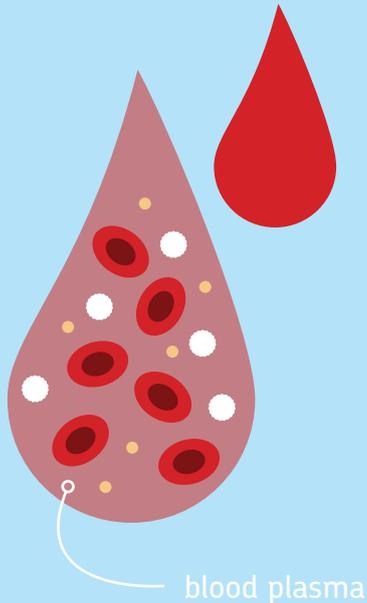
Daddy answers that the sample and electrocardiogram will be analysed. In a few days, a doctor will call and explain how to make Little Labby feel better.

**At home, it is Dragon the Plushie's turn to get tested!**

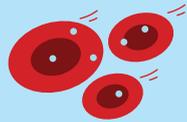


# What is blood and what does it do?

The human body is an incredible system that needs to be taken care of. Sometimes our bodies don't work as they should. That's why you can feel uncomfortable and sick. Laboratory tests help us learn how to get better.



**Blood** is a red liquid that runs in the veins. Blood delivers oxygen and nutrients to the body. Blood consists mostly of blood plasma. Red and white blood cells and platelets swim in blood plasma.



**Red blood cells** transport oxygen very fast. When you breathe in, oxygen flows into the lungs. Red blood cells dash to the lungs to pick up the oxygen. In red blood cells, oxygen travels in an iron seat called haemoglobin. Red blood cells give oxygen a tour around the body.



**White blood cells** are tiny ninjas that defend the body from various bugs, or pathogens.



**Platelets** help blood coagulate. If you get a cut, platelets hurry to the scene, grab each other and form a tight-knit net where the blood slowly coagulates. This creates a scab.

# What is the heart and how is it examined?

**The heart** is an organ pounding in your chest. Its role is to circulate blood around the body. The pounding of the heart is called pulse.



**Veins** are long and narrow tunnels under the skin. Blood carries important substances through the veins to every part of the body.



The heart is examined by drawing an **electrocardiogram, or ECG**. The stickers attached to the patient's chest, ankles and wrists are called electrodes. Electrodes and the wires connected to them draw a picture of the pulse on the machine screen. The pulse is presented by a winding line – the electrocardiogram. The diagram is analysed to see if the heart is working correctly.

# Welcome to the laboratory with your child!

## Tips for parents

A laboratory visit can be a stressful experience for a child. Tell your child about the tests in advance. This helps ease the child's fear and anxiety related to the laboratory tests. This booklet helps you prepare your child for the visit.

### **Before the visit**

Book an appointment for sample collection. For a child you need to book a longer appointment from section "Blood tests and/or urine tests and/or electrocardiogram (ECG)" or two consecutive appointments from section "Blood tests".

Tell your child in advance that the needle can hurt or sting a little. It is important that the child will not be surprised by the pain. You can numb the injection site before the appointment. Numbing creams sold in pharmacies without a prescription are suitable for this purpose. Follow the instructions and apply the "magic ointment" on the bends of both elbows before the appointment.

### **Sample collection**

Distracting the child during the sample collection can help relieve their tension. For example, the child can bring a comforting toy to the laboratory. You can also hum or sing the child their favourite song.

### **Remember!**

It is important that the parent remains calm during the appointment. The child can sense the parent's nervousness. The parent may also stay in the waiting room for the duration of the sample collection.

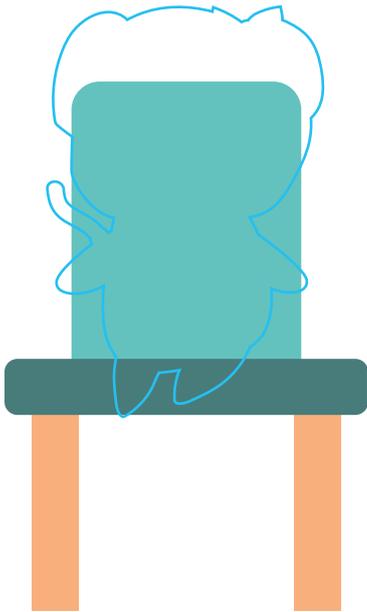
### **Read your child stories about the subject to ease their anxiety. Book recommendations (in Finnish):**

- Veera lääkäriissä, Aino Havukainen and Sami Toivonen, 2012
- Roosa sairaalassa, Tuula Portin and Susanna Sinivirta, 2016
- Auts, tohtori Tiikka!, Annet Rudolph, 2016
- Milla menee lääkäriin, Aline de Pétigny, 2005
- Heippa – täällä bakteeri!, Pentti Huovinen, 2007

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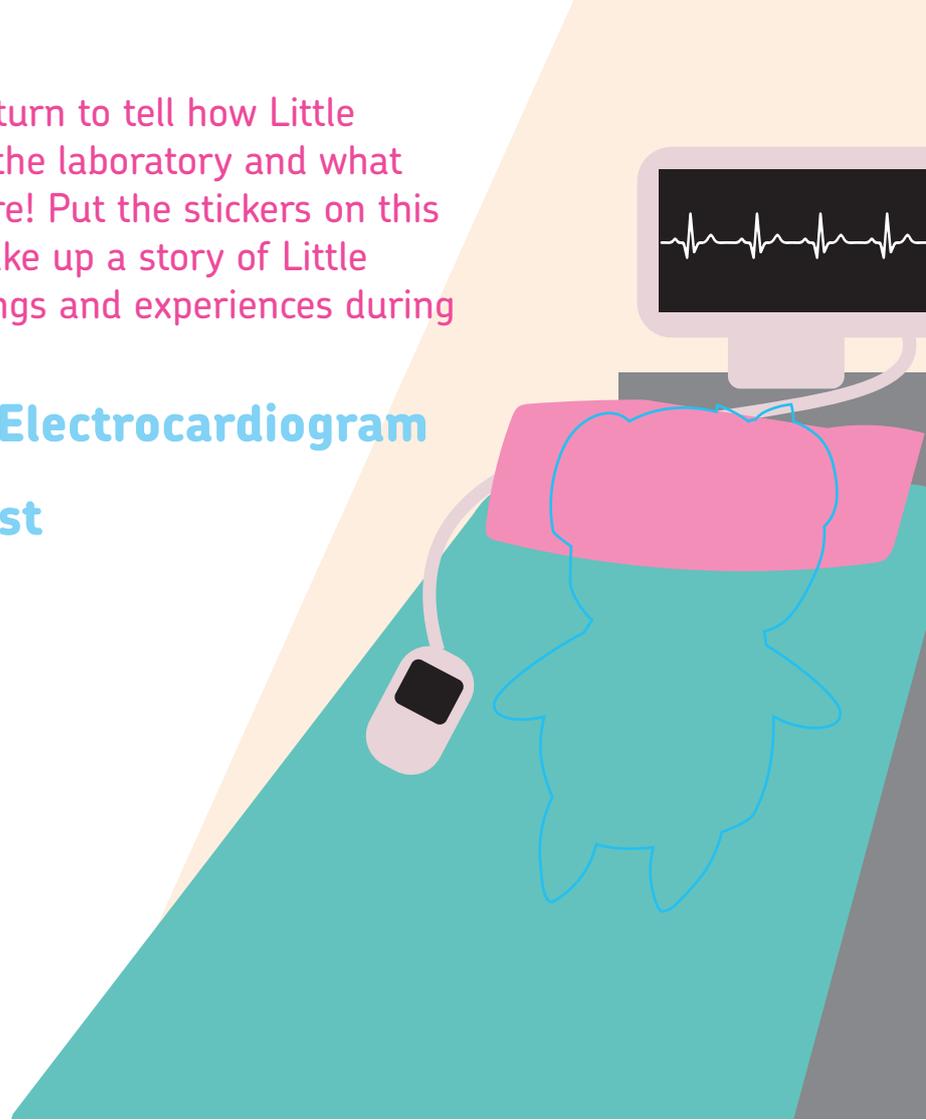


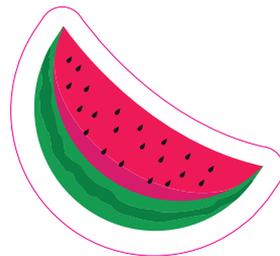
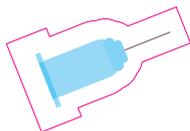
Now is your turn to tell how Little Labby visits the laboratory and what happens there! Put the stickers on this page and make up a story of Little Labby's feelings and experiences during the visit.



**Electrocardiogram**

**Blood test**





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