Medi, Human Robot Interaction in Pediatric Health

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Abstract
When children go through a medical procedure (e.g. a blood draw), they often experience increased levels of anxiety and stress. We believe that having an empathetic robot companion during the procedure can help children cope with pain and improve their overall experience. The robot makes use of a set of behaviors derived from pain management literature and modeled on human behaviors and cognitive behavioral therapy. In order to investigate the role of the robot as social companion, we are currently performing a Wizard of Oz study at a children's hospital. Our results are preliminary, but so far we have observed -as illustrated in the video- that the robot can improve the experience for children as long as they are not highly agitated.