

FOUR WAYS TO FIND A PEDIATRICIAN YOU'LL LOVE.

Sure, there are a lot of options out there, but finding the right doctor for you and your child takes time and a little patience.

With that, we've got some great pointers to help you on the search. Perfect tips for expecting mothers, new movers, or folks who've just switched jobs and healthcare plans.

(Feel free to print it. Hang it on the fridge, too.)

#1 Make a list of potential pediatricians.

Ask around.

- Get advice from other parents you know and trust
- Ask your obstetrician
- Check your healthcare plan's approved network
- Call your local hospital

#2 Think of what's important to you, and do a little research.

Here are some things to consider...

- Private practice—is the pediatrician private or part of a larger health system with multiple locations?
- Size of the practice—do you want partner pediatricians seeing your child?
- Hospital affiliations—if hospitalization is required, where will your child be transferred?
- Convenience—is the practice's location close to your home, office or your child's school?
- Office hours—do the practice's hours fit into your schedule?
- Languages—is the pediatrician fluent in your native language?
- Insurance—does the practice accept your insurance?
- Gender—do you have a preference of the doctor's gender, based on your child's?
- Expertise—how many years in practice has the doctor had; does he or she participate in any clinical trials or research; how many patients does the physician see?
- Education—where did the pediatrician attend medical school, complete residency and postgraduate training?
- Specialties—any conditions or treatments your pediatrician has a special interest, focus, or training in?

Check out online resources, especially ones with reviews and ratings, like these:

- Children's National primary care: [ChildrensNational.org/MyMedicalHome](https://www.childrensnational.org/MyMedicalHome)
- American Academy of Pediatrics: [HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)
- Physician ratings: [Healthgrades.com](https://www.healthgrades.com)

#3 Set up an interview.

Once you've narrowed down your list, make an appointment to visit the pediatricians' offices. Go, and be observant.

- Is the office clean, safe, and kid-friendly?
- How long do you have to wait in the waiting room?
- Does the doctor welcome questions?
- Does the doctor take time to discuss problems and listen to your concerns?
- Does the doctor seem to know about the latest medical advances?
- How does the doctor's personality fit with yours?
- Does the doctor communicate clearly, using layman's terms to explain illnesses and treatments, and does the doctor make an effort to ensure that all your questions are answered?

#4 You definitely have questions, so ask away.

Get down to the nitty gritty.

- How much time do you allow for each office visit?
- What is your policy on taking and returning phone calls?
- Who handles phone calls when the office is closed or during vacations?
- What do we do in the case of an emergency if you're not available?
- Can you make an appointment on short notice, if necessary?
- Are there walk-in hours or urgent appointments?
- If a specialist(s) is ever needed, will the pediatrician coordinate care among all those providing treatment?
- Can we call with questions that do not require an office visit? What about after-hours phone calls?
- Does this office use electronic medical records, and would I have online access to my child's records?

New parents, these are great questions to ask...

- When should I bring my baby for the first office visit?
- How do you support breastfeeding?
- How well do you know the infant and toddler programs in the community?

As always, Children's National is here for you. We believe that finding a pediatrician—one that's just right for you and your child—is essential to health and happiness.

Don't hesitate to call with further questions.
(And good luck!)

1-888-884-BEAR (2327)