

Choosing Your Baby's Doctor

Choosing a pediatrician for your baby is one of the most important decisions you will have to make. A good way to start your search is to ask friends, family, co-workers and your physician for a referral. Once you have a list of names, you can begin to schedule initial consultations with each physician to determine if he/she fits your needs. We've provided this list of questions to help you choose your baby's physician.

Questions to Ask the Physician During the Appointment:

1. Does the practice accept my health insurance plan?
2. How does the practice handle billing/insurance claims and payment?
3. Does the physician share a practice with other physicians? Will my child always see the same physician?
4. Does the physician have a nurse practitioner or physician assistant? If so, what are their roles in the office and in the hospital?
5. Is the physician available 24 hours a day, seven days a week? If not, is there an on-call physician available?
6. Who covers for the physician when he/she is not available?
7. Does the practice have same-day appointments available should my child become suddenly ill?
8. Does the physician believe in the importance of vaccines?
9. At what hospital does the physician have admitting privileges?
10. How far in advance do well-baby visits need to be scheduled?
11. What are the office hours? Are weekend appointments available?
12. What is the physician's philosophy on issues such as breastfeeding, toilet training, discipline and nutrition?

Other Considerations After the Appointment:

1. Was the office and staff well organized?
2. Was the waiting room pleasant and kid friendly?
3. Was the office in a convenient location?
4. Were medical conditions/procedures clearly explained in a way that you could understand?
5. Were you given the opportunity to ask questions?
6. Did you feel your opinions were listened to and valued?