

BAByTalk

A Publication for Parents from Boys Town Pediatrics



How to Choose Your Pediatrician

What is a pediatrician?

A pediatrician is a medical physician who spends 3 additional years of training devoted to the care of infants, children and adolescents. They are trained in child development and behavior, preventative medicine and the diagnosis and management of acute and chronic illnesses in children.

Why does your child need a pediatrician?

Children are not "small adults." They go through myriad physical, emotional and cognitive changes from birth to adulthood. Pediatricians are trained to help families through the stages of normal development and to recognize any subtle abnormalities that may arise.

When would your child see a pediatrician?

Your child's first visit should be at 2-5 days of life, 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 24 months. During these visits, your child's growth and development are thoroughly reviewed. Additionally, anytime you have concerns regarding your child's health, your pediatrician will want your child evaluated.

How do you choose a pediatrician?

Schedule a prenatal interview with a pediatrician to make sure he/she is the right fit for your family. Make sure that the pediatrician you choose is someone who you feel comfortable with caring for your child and someone who will listen to your concerns and involve you in your child's treatment plan.

Questions to ask during a prenatal interview with a pediatrician:

- Is this physician board certified in pediatrics?
- What is the physician's philosophy regarding breast feeding, antibiotics and non-traditional medicine?
- What are the office hours?
- Are evening and Saturday hours available?
- Who will I speak with if I have a question regarding my child during office hours?
- What happens if I have questions regarding my child after hours?
- How far in advance do health care maintenance visits need to be scheduled?
- What is appointment availability like for sick visits?
- Who are the physicians who will care for my child if my pediatrician is not available?

