

Questions for Your Baby's Potential Doctor

Your child's doctor will be a major source of information, support, and of course medical care for you over the coming years, so you'll want someone you can trust. You can ask friends, colleagues, neighbors, and your own doctor for recommendations. Once you have a list and are sure that they're on your health plan's list of providers, schedule consultations with them. Here are some potential questions you may want to ask:

Things to Ask on the Phone

- Do you accept my insurance?
- What hospital(s) are you affiliated with?
- If my baby needs treatment at birth, are you able to provide services at the hospital where I'm delivering?

Questions to Ask in Person

- How long have you been a doctor, and how long have you been in this practice?
- Are you board certified?
- Do you have a subspecialty?
- What is your philosophy on such child health issues as breastfeeding, immunization, co-sleeping, toilet learning, etc.?

- What is your policy on the use of antibiotics?
- Do you offer early, late, and weekend appointments?
- Do you offer call-in hours, or does your office field calls at any time? If I leave a message, how long does it typically take to get a return call? Will you answer questions by e-mail?
- How are emergency calls handled by your office?
- Which tests are handled here (throat cultures, blood tests)? Which have to be done somewhere else (X-rays)? Where?
- Will you be the one who handles my well-baby visits, or will another doctor or nurse practitioner do so?
- Will I be able to get a same-day appointment if my child is sick? Will you be the one who handles sick-baby visits, or will another doctor in the group or a nurse practitioner do so?

You can usually obtain information on physicians by visiting your state's website. For Massachusetts, you can find detailed information at: <http://profiles.massmedboard.org/MA-Physician-Profile-Find-Doctor.asp>

If you have your health insurance through an employer, speak to your Human Resources department about adding your new baby to your health insurance policy.



