

# 3-STEP GUIDE TO CHOOSING A PEDIATRICIAN

You want the very best for your child and choosing a pediatrician is an important decision. Consider these tips when making your choice.

## 1 DEFINE YOUR PRIORITIES

Define what is most important to you and your family in choosing a pediatrician. Here are some questions to consider:

- What is the doctor's philosophy of care? Does it align with your values?
- Are the clinic locations convenient? (Are there options near home, work, or other important areas of your life?)
- Does the clinic offer conveniences that are important to you? (open hours, urgent care, same day or walk-in appointments, online access to electronic medical records, etc.)
- Does the clinic have an affiliation with a hospital or connection with a network of specialty care?
- Is the doctor and/or clinic considered "in network" for the health insurance that covers your child(ren)?

## 2 SEEK RECOMMENDATIONS AND DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Ask your obstetrician or midwife for recommendations. Get more than just names and clinics: ask why they think you should trust the provider with your child's care.
- Ask family and friends who share your values about their experiences with specific clinics and pediatricians.
- Research both pediatricians and clinics online to see how they fit with your priorities. Clinic websites are a great place to start, but also consider conducting searches online or through social media.
- Call the clinic to ask questions; if a pediatrician isn't available, talk with the clinic manager.
- Arrange a meeting with the pediatrician (in person or on the phone). Many clinics offer expectant parent classes to help assist in this decision process.

### CONTACT ONE OF CHILDREN'S 9 PRIMARY CARE CLINICS

**Brooklyn Park**  
Partners in Pediatrics  
763-425-1211

**Hugo**  
Children's Hugo Clinic  
651-426-1141

**Maple Grove**  
Partners in Pediatrics  
763-559-2861

**Minneapolis**  
Children's Primary Care &  
Adolescent Clinics  
612-813-6107

**Plymouth**  
Partners in Pediatrics  
763-520-1200

**Rogers**  
Partners in Pediatrics  
763-428-1920

**St. Louis Park**  
Partners in Pediatrics  
952-930-8400

**St. Paul**  
Children's Primary Care Clinic  
651-220-6700

**West St. Paul**  
Children's West St. Paul Clinic  
651-726-9500

[childrensMN.org/  
primarycare](http://childrensMN.org/primarycare)

## 3 NARROW DOWN YOUR CHOICES AND ASK QUESTIONS

### Location

- Is the clinic conveniently located to meet your needs?
- Is there easy parking and building access?
- Does the clinic have affiliate clinics nearby if your clinic isn't available?

### Experience of the clinic providers

- How many years have they been in practice?
- What is the level of training (Physician, nurse practitioner, pediatric or family practice specialty)?
- Do you prefer a male or female pediatrician for your child? Are there both at the clinic if your child has a preference in the future?

### Philosophy of care/communication style

- What's their communication style? Do they listen to and trust your instincts? Are they open to questions, do they provide recommendations and guidance and function as a partner in your child's care?
- What's their philosophy of care? Opinion on vaccination use? Frequency of well check-ups — do they follow American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations? What's their philosophy on prescribing medications? Do they treat the whole child — taking time to focus on prevention, nutrition, development, mental health and the family environment?

### Convenience

- What are office hours?
- Are same-day or walk-in appointments available?
- What after-hours or urgent care do they offer?
- Do they have weekend hours?
- How many other pediatricians are at the clinic to care for your child if your primary care provider is unavailable?
- Do they have a triage nurse to take calls during the day and help you decide if an appointment is needed?

- How are after-hours calls handled?
- What other services are available at the clinic (X-ray, lab, lactation consultant, telehealth, specialists, pharmacy)?

### Comfort

- Is the clinic bright and welcoming?
- Are staff helpful and friendly?
- Do they understand kid's needs and respond accordingly?
- Is there a separate waiting area for well children and/or newborns?
- Is the wait time reasonable? Is there enough time within your appointment to get your questions answered without feeling rushed?

### Affiliations

- Is the clinic part of a larger health system with access to pediatric specialty clinics?
- What hospitals is it affiliated with?
- What hospital emergency room or urgent care do they recommend?
- Does your insurance cover services at these facilities?

### Insurance

- Is the clinic within your insurance network?
- Does the clinic accept a variety of plans in case your coverage changes?
- What if you don't have insurance?
- Is a payment plan possible if you are not covered by insurance? What other financial resources are available?
- How does the clinic handle payments, billing, laboratory charges and insurance claims?