

Choosing a Health Care Provider for your Baby

Why should I choose a health care provider for my baby now?

Getting ready for a new baby can be a lot of work. You have to prepare, and there is a lot to remember. Choosing a provider for your baby is one of the things you should do now before the baby comes. This will give you some time to pick someone who is right for you and the baby. After the baby is born, you will probably be very busy. Your baby can stay healthier if you already have a provider to call.

Won't my doctor or midwife take care of my baby too?

Some mothers think that their midwife or OB/GYN doctor will take care of their baby too. This is not true. Your baby will need a pediatrician, family practice doctor, pediatric/family nurse practitioner, or PA (Physician's assistant). All of these providers take care of new babies.

How do I choose a health care provider for my baby?

We have provided a list of providers in this packet; there may be others not listed. Your friends or family may also have recommendations for providers they like. Call the provider's office and ask for the provider's policies for new babies. They may send information in the mail or tell you over the phone. Some providers will meet with new parents. Decide for yourself if the provider is a good partner to have for your baby's health.

Ask these questions to help you decide which provider is right for you and your baby:

- Do you accept my insurance?
- Are you taking new patients?
- What are your office hours?
- What is your education and experience?
- Will you take care of my baby in the hospital or do you use a hospital doctor?
- How early do I have to call to schedule a check-up?
- If my baby is sick, how soon can I get an appointment?
- How do I get health care for my baby after office hours?
- What are your opinions about:
 - Breastfeeding?
 - Circumcision?
 - Nutrition?
 - Immunizations (baby's shots)?
 - Parenting?
 - Day Care?