



Interviewing a Pediatrician

Even if there's only one name on your list of potential pediatricians (we recommend at least two), it's a good idea to meet in person and learn about their practice and philosophy. Try to settle on a pediatrician by your seventh or eighth month to avoid waddling in and out of even more doctor's offices during those last few weeks of pregnancy.

The best way to start your search: Ask around—your friends, family and OB are great sources for referrals. You can also check the list of [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) members in your area. (Don't forget to run candidate names through your [state's medical board](#) to check for any disciplinary action.)

Once you've got a few names, it's time to set up the interviews. You'll probably only have about 10 minutes for each, so ask the most important questions first. Remember, there are no "right" answers here—let your (baby-filled) gut be your guide.

Basic Information

Doctor:

- Doctor:
- Practice:
- Location:
- Phone:
- Email:
- Website:

Ask the Doctor

- How long have you been practicing?
- Do you have any sub-specialties?

- What are your hours? Do you offer evenings or weekends?
- Do you offer same-day sick appointments? How far in advance do well appointments need to be scheduled?
- What if my baby gets sick when the office is closed? Who covers in an emergency if you aren't on call?
- Is this a solo or group practice? If it's solo, who covers when you are gone? If it's a group, how often will we see you, and how often will we see other members?
- Do you have separate sick and well waiting rooms?
- Do you respond to questions by e-mail? Do you accept calls for routine and non-emergency questions? If I leave a message, how long does it usually take you to return the call?
- Will your initial meeting with my baby be at the hospital or the first checkup? What is your schedule for well baby checkups?
- Will you discuss my child's general growth and issues like discipline and social development?
- What are your views on... Bottle feeding? Circumcision? Parenting techniques? Getting babies to sleep? Alternative medicine? Antibiotics?

Immunizations? Childhood obesity?

- What hospitals do you work with?
- Do you take my insurance? Is there an extra charge for...Advice calls during the day? Advice calls after hours? Medication refills? Filling out forms? Will any other fees apply?
- What are your policies for insurance claims, lab policies, payments and billing?
- What tests are handled in the office, and what is done elsewhere? Where?

Ask Yourself

- Was the office clean?
- Was the waiting room kid-friendly, with toys and books?
- How soon could the interview be scheduled? How long were you in the waiting room?
- Was the office staff helpful? Were the nurses friendly?
- Was the interview rushed? Did the doctor seem open to questions?