

Benefits of Having a Primary Care Physician

Having a primary care physician is vital to your child's health, growth, and development. Your primary care doctor will also be the person to generally conduct child well visits; so if possible, your child should see a pediatrician. The American Academy of Pediatrics and our own "How to Choose a Pediatrician" tips provide information on how to choose a pediatrician and recommends that your child should see a pediatrician if your primary care doctor is not one.

Preventative Care

Most pediatricians provide primary healthcare for newborns through age 21. Through this, they provide preventive care, treat injuries and illnesses, and help identify (diagnose?) and care for acute and chronic illnesses. One of the biggest benefits of having a primary care doctor who specialized in caring for children is his or her experience referring to pediatric specialists. If your child begins to develop symptoms of a serious condition or illness, your pediatrician may be able to refer you to a specialist who only treats children. These referrals will often allow your child to be seen sooner with the specialists busy schedule

Central Point of Contact

A primary care physician also provides a central point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child's health. This is the person you go to anytime you have questions, and your pediatrician often will be the person that a specialist reports back to or consults with to create a plan of care for your child. This means that your primary care physician will always have the most up-to-date information on your child's health.

Continuity

Your primary care doctor is not only concerned with treating a specific issue or ailment, but rather focuses on keeping your child healthy throughout his or her lifetime. This is why choosing a pediatrician as your primary care doctor is so important. While your child grows and develops, your pediatrician will be the most reliable person to ensure your child is growing and developing properly.

Health History

Once you have been seeing your primary care doctor for a period of time, he or she will know your health history in ways that others may not. A doctor will not get a sense of your child's personality or your small health history issues just from reading your medical records. This will allow your child to get the best treatment from your primary care physician who is familiar with all the nuances (or details) of your child's health background.

Fewer Emergency Department Trips

Many studies also have found that more primary care physicians results in fewer trips to the emergency department. When you visit a primary care physician to help diagnose routine illnesses, you reduce the number of times you have to take your kids to see an emergency department physician. This also helps reduce the number of patients in the emergency department, allowing them to focus their energy on true emergency cases.