

# Tips for choosing a new medical provider

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## Questions to ask a potential doctor

### 1) Disability-related

- a. What is your experience working with children with disabilities or chronic illness?
- b. What is your experience working with children who have diagnoses similar to my child?

### 2) Appointments

- a. Ease of scheduling appointments
- b. Office hours for appointments outside of school day
- c. How long does a typical appointment last?

### 3) Responsiveness & Accessibility

- a. Can you contact the physician with questions by phone or email?
- b. Does the office have calling hours where you can reach the doctor directly by phone?
- c. How long does it take for a doctor or nurse to return a call?
- d. Who covers when the doctor is on vacation? What if your child has a medical emergency while you are out?

### 4) Insurance

- a. What insurance plans do they accept?
- b. Does it accept a variety of plans in case your insurance changes?
- c. Do they allow payment plans if a service isn't covered by insurance?

### 5) Emergency medical care

- a. At which hospitals does the doctor have privileges?
  - i. Does your insurance cover services at this hospital?
- b. How do you contact doctor after hours in an emergency? Pager? Answering service?
- c. Will the doctor meet you at the hospital in an emergency?

### 6) Personal values, beliefs and experiences

- a. What is the doctor's philosophy/approach to caring for children like yours?
- b. What is the doctor's certification(s)? From which governing organization?
- c. Does the doctor have any specialized training?

## During your first appointment or interview

1. Arrive early to your interview appointment and chat with others in the waiting room about their experience with this practice.
2. Ask the office staff questions. Are they helpful? Responsive?
3. Notice how the doctor and staff interact with your child.