

Choosing a Primary Care Provider for Your Baby

Tips for parents of NICU babies

One of the most important decisions that you will make as a new parent is choosing a primary care provider (PCP) for your baby. This healthcare provider will take care of your baby's medical needs after discharge. **We suggest you choose a provider who specializes in pediatric care** instead of a general practitioner.

Start thinking about who will be your baby's PCP now, while your baby is still in the NICU. Then, please choose your baby's PCP at least 2 weeks before your baby is discharged from the hospital. After your baby is discharged, we will send your baby's PCP:

- A copy of your baby's discharge summary
- A recap of everything that happened during your baby's hospital stay

How do I find the right PCP for my baby?

- Ask your health insurance company for a list of providers in your area that are covered by your insurance plan. (Look on your health insurance card for their customer service phone number.) If you have questions about your health insurance plan, please ask to talk with the NICU social worker.
- If you would like help choosing a PCP from the list, please ask the NICU care team.
- Once you have chosen a PCP, call their office. Ask if they are accepting new patients with your insurance. If they are, be ready to ask questions from your list (see next page). Find out if they are a good fit for you and your baby.



See your baby's primary care provider within 1 to 2 days after your baby is discharged from the hospital.

Questions to Ask

Here are questions to think about when you are looking for a PCP for your baby:

- Does the PCP have training and experience in caring for high-risk infants?
- Does the PCP support you in your beliefs about issues such as breastfeeding, circumcision, feeding, and day care?
- Does the PCP offer lactation support in their office or clinic?
- Are you comfortable talking with the PCP? Do they listen to your concerns and respect what you say?
- Does the PCP have office hours that fit your family's needs?
- How does the PCP handle calls when the office is closed? Is there an after-hours phone number for parents to use if they have questions?
- How quickly does the PCP call back, if you leave a message?
- Is the PCP willing to answer your questions by phone or email?
- Is the PCP's office easy for you to get to? Is it close to your home or office? Is there parking nearby?
- Will you always see your PCP for visits or will you see other care providers in the same office from time to time?

Next Steps

Once you have chosen your baby's PCP:

- Give the PCP's name and contact information to NICU staff.
- Schedule an office visit with the PCP for 1 to 2 days after your baby has been discharged from the NICU. Try to set this up before your baby leaves the hospital.
- Tell the NICU care team the date and time of your baby's first PCP visit.
- If you need an interpreter, arrange to have one at your first visit.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit:
206.598.4606