



Catholic Healthcare West

Ask the Expert
Arizona Republic

Q: We've recently moved to the East Valley and my wife and I are looking for a pediatrician for our daughter. What is the best way to locate information on a new pediatrician for someone who is new to the area?

A: Finding the right pediatrician is very important to your child's early development. It's a task that shouldn't be taken lightly, and it's imperative that you research a number of pediatricians before selecting your child's doctor. You'll want to look for a board certified pediatrician who has the ability to treat a broad range of illnesses, from serious diseases to minor childhood illness. You'll also want to be sure to incorporate the following tips into selecting the most suitable pediatrician for your child:

- **Check online.** There are many online tools available for researching local pediatricians, including one developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics that allows parents to quickly access information about local pediatricians. Other online tools allow you to conduct a background check on local pediatricians through the state medical boards. Visit the individual website for the practice or pediatricians you are considering.
- **Check with your healthcare insurance provider.** Healthcare insurance providers may be particular about which pediatricians are in or out of network. Be sure to check with your healthcare insurance provider to see what options are available to you as this will help you narrow down the number of pediatricians to consider. You'll also want to know if your pediatrician has privileges at your preferred hospital.
- **Location.** It is important to not only find a pediatrician that you trust, but also one that is conveniently located to your neighborhood. You'll want to determine if the practice has multiple offices and where the pediatrician spends most of his or her time. A pediatrician that is close to work or home is very beneficial when it comes time for appointments or if an emergency arises.
- **Referrals.** Consult with your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to obtain information and opinions on pediatricians in your area. Ask them why they recommend their pediatrician and how long their children have been patients. Talking to people directly about their experiences is sometimes the best way to find out if a pediatrician will be a good fit for you and your family.

“ **Interview more than one pediatrician.** You should visit with a few different pediatricians before selecting the one you feel most comfortable with. Some pediatricians offer open houses so you can visit the office and learn more about them. By speaking with multiple pediatricians, you’ll gain a better sense of their bedside manner and which pediatrician will be most compatible with you and your child.

Deanna Grey, R.N., is the director of the Lund Family Pediatric and Adolescent Unit at Mercy Gilbert Medical Center. Mercy Gilbert Medical Center is part of the Catholic Healthcare West (CHW) system in Arizona, which includes Chandler Regional Medical Center, St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center and Barrow Neurological Institute, CHW Urgent Care in Ahwatukee, Gilbert and Queen Creek, the Sun Lakes Laboratory, Warner Outpatient Surgery and the Arizona Orthopedic Surgical Hospital. For a physician referral, please call the ResourceLink toll-free at 1.877.728.5414.