

PEDIATRIC CORNER

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A lifetime resolution: Building a great relationship with your pediatrician.

Each New Year brings new opportunities, new goals, and new resolutions. It's that one time each year we reflect on the past, and prepare our families for new relationships each New Year brings. For new parents or "soon to be" the year ahead only means one thing. Choosing the right pediatrician to care for their child. Children have different health care needs than adults - both medical and emotional. In choosing a pediatrician, you can know that an expert in children's health is treating your child. Believe it or not, your pediatrician will play a significant role in your child's growth and development over the next eighteen years.

Building a trusting relationship with your pediatrician is key for the long haul. As new parents you must be comfortable calling your pediatrician's office, either during office hours for routine questions or at any time for an emergency. Sometimes, we as parents can sense there is a problem before symptoms actually show up. So, if you are worried about your child, call right away.

Always call and get proper medical advice. But, before you call, have a pen and paper ready to write down any instructions and questions. You could easily forget some details, especially when you are worried about your child. Be ready to gather information about your child's health. Realize, though, that sometimes your pediatrician may not be able to answer your questions without first seeing your child. If you are not sure whether to call. Trust your instincts. Make the call.

PULL QUOTE: If at anytime you feel something could be wrong with your child's health, and your pediatrician is difficult to contact, not easily accessible, or slow responding to your needs, it is time to find a better one... immediately.

Community minded pediatricians will often work with teachers and other adults in child care centers, schools, and after-school programs. If your child has a very special or complex problem, your pediatrician may refer them to another specialist for further help, if needed. As your child grows your pediatrician will continue to play an important role not only for illness or injury care, but for all sorts of health areas such as exercise, nutrition, learning problems, emotional and behavioral problems to helping them cope with issues like divorce and death.

Good pediatricians are trained to diagnose and treat the health problems in newborns, toddlers, pre-teens, and young adults. And, like old friends, teenage patients tend to trust their pediatrician, because they've known them their whole life. Remember, you and your pediatrician will need to work as a team to ensure that your little one grows up happy and healthy.

Only choose those who practice pediatric excellence.

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