

Do I Really Need A

Why do I need a primary care provider?

Primary care providers, or PCPs, are health care professionals who either treat or coordinate treatment for all aspects of a person's medical care. They treat chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease as well as brief illnesses such as strep throat or the flu. They also provide routine health screenings, vaccines, and counseling on lifestyle changes to help you stay healthy. If you need additional care for an illness or condition, your PCP can help direct your care with other medical specialists.

Don't wait until you get sick to find a health care provider. The best time to start taking care of your health is before you get sick. Regular exams with your PCP ensure that you receive the preventive care you need when you need it. They help you develop a relationship with your health care provider. If you do get sick, your PCP can treat you or help you find a specialist if you need one.

Several different types of health care professionals (PCPs) can provide care for you.

Family medicine doctors provide care for all ages and provide maternity care for pregnant women. Some family medicine doctors also provide care for children and adults.

Internists provide care for children and adults. **Internal medicine-pediatrics doctors** provide care for children and adults.

Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine provide care for all ages and can impact your wellbeing. Some doctors of osteopathic medicine also provide whole-person care that includes lifestyle changes.

Nurse Practitioners are registered nurses (RNs) who have completed advanced education and training and are trained to diagnose and treat medical conditions. Nurse Practitioners can care for children and adults and provide preventive care.

Geriatricians provide care for older adults. **Obstetrician-gynecologists**, referred to as OB/GYNs, diagnose and treat disorders of women's reproductive systems, monitor pregnancies and supervise childbirth.

