

## Finding a Family Doctor

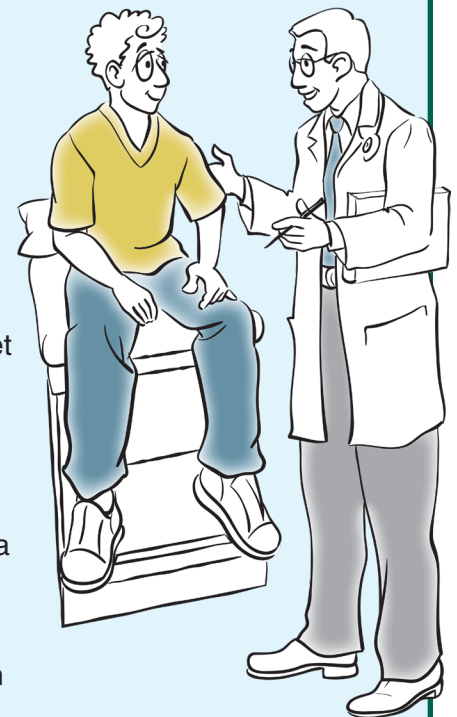
Establishing and maintaining a doctor-patient relationship is key to preventing chronic conditions and detecting cancer and other diseases in their earliest stages. If you're among the 28% of U.S. men and 17% of women that do not have a family doctor, we encourage you to find one as soon as possible.

A good way to begin a family doctor search is to ask family and friends for recommendations. You can also search online for reviews of area physicians. Be sure to consider location, the doctor's certification background, and his or her availability.

When you contact the doctor's office, be ready with questions. Are they taking new patients? What are their office hours? What is the average wait time to get an appointment with the doctor?

Once you have found a family doctor you like, visit the office to have a conversation with them (see below). It is important that you feel you can be truthful with the doctor, as it is necessary for them to know exactly what your current health condition is – mental as well as physical – in order to establish a correct diagnosis and treatment plan.

Be sure to visit with your new family doctor annually for your wellness exam. You should also see them for screenings and preventive care, as well as when you begin to feel sick. And when you have concerns about your health, never be shy about letting your doctor know and asking questions.



## Prepping for the Doctor-Patient Conversation

Consider asking these questions in addition to any other ones you may have.

- "How do you keep up to date on the latest medical advancements?"
- "What experience do you have with my particular medical needs? How many of your patients are in my demographics?"
- "Will I see you at every appointment? Do you work with specialists? What hospital do you work with?"
- "What are my treatment options? What are the benefits of each option? What are the side effects?"
- "What will the medicine you are prescribing do? How do I take it? Are there any side effects (severe or mild)?"
- "Do I need to change my daily routine to benefit my overall health or for my medication to work properly?"



SOURCES: American Academy of Family Physicians, U.S. News, Fierce Healthcare, Healthy Living