



The benefits of having a family doctor

There are many benefits to using a family doctor. Your family gets the advantage of having a doctor who is familiar with you and your family history. A family doctor also has a broad scope of knowledge. Family doctors are primary-care physicians who focus on preventive medicine and take a proactive approach to keeping your family healthy. These doctors see patients for a wide range of symptoms, including colds, the flu, diabetes, mental health issues and minor injuries.

Did you know there are several types of family doctors? It is important to know the differences between these types of doctors. Many of us use general practice and family practice doctors for our health care needs. A **general practice doctor** treats all members of the family from birth through adulthood and provides general overall care for their patients. Many general practice doctors are found in hospitals and other health care facilities.

The **family practice doctor** treats all members of the family from birth through adulthood as well. A family practice doctor will provide the same type of care as the general practice doctor, but with a great deal more focus on the family unit. Rather than working in a hospital unit or larger establishment, family practice doctors are generally in smaller, private practices. Family practice doctors establish long-term relationships with their patients and usually treat the entire family. This type of doctor would be the best choice for families that want to be able to go to one place for all the family members' health care needs.

A family practice doctor can help your family make healthier life choices by educating you on nutrition, exercise and how to live a healthy lifestyle as you grow. You form a bond of trust with your doctor, and your doctor can learn your patterns to help guide you to better health. In many cases, your family doctor is able to treat your medical issue without sending you to a specialist, but if a specialist is needed, he or she is the best person to direct you where to go. Your family doctor has the most complete

history on you and therefore is the most qualified to assist you in finding where to go for care.

The **internal medicine doctor** generally sees patients starting at age 18 through adulthood. An internal medicine doctor focuses on adult medicine and focuses on the prevention and treatment of adult diseases. This includes areas such as wellness (disease prevention and the promotion of health), women's health, substance abuse and mental health, as well as effective treatment of common problems of the eyes, ears, skin, nervous system and reproductive organs. Some adults do not want to go to a doctor's office where there are young children when they are sick, so this would be a good choice for them.

The **pediatrician** treats children only, from birth to age 18, specializing in medical care of infants, children and

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adolescents. Some families prefer doctors who focus on children and are prepared to handle the different challenges of treating children.

You can visit the NALC Health Benefit Plan website or call the provider locator line to find a family practice doctor, general practice doctor, internal medicine doctor or pediatrician near you.

2011 seminar reminder and updates

This year, the NALC health benefit seminar is scheduled for Oct. 16-19 at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. While the seminar always has been considered an educational tool for our health benefit representatives to prepare them for the upcoming Open Season, the registration is open to all branch officers, shop stewards and orientation greeters. If you would like more information about the seminar, please don't hesitate to contact the Plan at 888-636-NALC. ✉