



Choosing a pediatric health care team

Sometimes, a doctor's visit can seem overwhelming and confusing, especially when you've learned that your child requires a high level of specialty care. Choosing your pediatric cardiologist team is a really important decision, since they will be your partners in caring for and treating your child, and your family, for a long time.

Before your appointment, you can look up the doctor's education and credentials at the Arizona Board of Medicine:

<http://www.azmd.gov/GLSPages/DoctorSearch.aspx>

Many families have found it helpful to take friend or family member to the appointment to take notes. Bring a list of questions to ask, so you don't forget anything important.

Here are some questions you may want to ask the pediatric cardiologist:

- What kinds of tests does my child need? Do these tests require any special preparation?
- How many children with my child's problem have you cared for?
- Does my child need treatment? If so, when?
- What are our treatment choices?
- What could happen if we decide not to treat?
- What is the best treatment?
- What are the possible problems or complications?
- How will we monitor for possible problems or complications?
- If I have more children, what are the odds of this condition occurring again?
- Can you give me any printed material on this that I can take home with me?
- Can you suggest some websites that have good information on this?
- What question do you think I should have asked?

- Can I teach back to you what I understood from this conversation, so you can correct any misunderstandings now?

Here are some questions you may want to ask the pediatric cardiac surgeon:

- Can you show me the problem on the imaging tests my child had?
- How many children with my child's problem have you operated on?
- What are our treatment choices? Are they available here?
- What is the best treatment?
- What could happen if we decide not to treat?
- What would you consider a successful outcome?
- What are the chances our child's surgery will be successful?
- What would we do if this surgery doesn't work?
- Can we donate blood for the surgery?
- What are the possible problems or complications?
- How will we monitor for possible problems or complications?
- What medicines might my child need after surgery and how long would the child be on them?
- What side effects could these medications cause?
- Will this surgery be covered by our health insurance?
- Can you give me any printed material on this that I can take home with me?
- Can you suggest some websites that have good information on this?
- What question do you think I should have asked?

- Can I teach back to you what I understood from this conversation, so you can correct any misunderstandings now?

If you want a second opinion, ask the Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://www.azaap.org/Contact>) for names of other doctors in your area.