

Your Pediatrician is Certified by the American Board of Pediatrics

What Makes your Pediatrician Special?

By choosing a Board-certified pediatrician, you have chosen the highest level of medical care for your child.

Pediatricians practice the specialty of medical science concerned with the physical, emotional, and social health of children from birth to young adulthood. Pediatric care encompasses a broad spectrum of health services ranging from preventive health care to diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic diseases.

Pediatricians understand the many factors that affect the growth and development of children. They understand that children are not simply small adults. Children change rapidly, and they must be approached with an appreciation for their stage of physical and mental development.

Because children's welfare is heavily dependent on the home and family, the pediatrician supports efforts to create a nurturing environment. Such support includes education about healthful living and guidance for both patients and parents. Pediatricians participate in the community to prevent or solve problems in child health care, and they serve as child advocates.

Pediatricians are therefore primarily concerned with the health, welfare, and development of children; they are uniquely qualified to provide care for children because of their specialized training and concern for their well being.

Pediatricians achieve their competency through training, experience and continuing education. Some pediatricians choose to focus their practice in one area of pediatrics; they physicians pursue additional training in a subspecialty. For example, pediatric cardiologists are pediatricians who specialize in diseases of the heart.

What is Board Certification?

Certification by the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) has one objective – to promote excellence in medical care for children. Certification represents dedication to the highest level of professionalism in patient care. ABP certification provides a standard of excellence by which the public can select pediatricians and pediatric subspecialties. Although ABP certification is voluntary, nearly all qualified pediatricians seek this recognition.

The ABP's certificate in General Pediatrics is awarded after all the following requirements have been met:

- **GRADUATION** from an accredited medical school in the United States, or Canada or from a foreign medical school recognized by the World Health Organization.
- **COMPLETION** of three years of training in pediatrics in an accredited residency program. This training involves the care of children in hospital and outpatient settings and is supervised by highly-trained medical specialists.

- VERIFICATION of satisfactory completion of residency training and acceptability as a practitioner of pediatrics, including the achievement of clinical competence and the demonstration of professional and ethical behavior.
- POSSESSION of a valid, unrestricted state license to practice medicine.
- SUCCESSFUL completion of a comprehensive 2-day written examination covering all aspects of health care for infants, children, and adolescents.

Subspecialists may earn certification in their field after three additional years of training in a focused area such as pediatric infectious diseases. They must be evaluated and recommended by someone qualified to judge their work, and they must pass a demanding examination in their subspecialty.

As of 1988, certification by the ABP is time-limited. To remain board certified, pediatricians must present evidence of licensure and pass an examination every 7 years. This recertification process recognizes the ABP's commitment to professionalism and its belief that lifelong scholarship and self-evaluation are required for high-quality medical care.

How do you know that your pediatrician is certified?

A Board-certified pediatrician possesses a certificate from the ABP and is referred to as a "Diplomate" of the American Board of Pediatrics.

Information about certification status can be obtained by calling the ABP (919-929-0461) or the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) at 1-800-776-2378. Certified specialists are also listed in directories published by the ABMS. These include individual directories for each specialty and *The Official ABMS Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists*, which can be found in many public libraries, and medical school libraries.

Most Board-certified pediatricians are members of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Physicians who have attained full membership are called "Fellows" of the American Academy of Pediatrics and are entitled to use this designation in all formal communications, such as certificates, publications, business cards, stationery and signage. Thus, "John Doe, M.D., FAAP" is a Fellow of the AAP. The AAP is committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Further information about the AAP may be obtained in writing to: American Academy of Pediatrics, 141 NW Point Blvd., P.O. Box 927, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927

What is the American Board of Pediatrics?

Founded in 1933, the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) is one of the 24 certifying boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). The ABP is an independent, non-profit organization whose certificate is recognized throughout the world as a credential signifying a high level of physician competence.

The Board of Directors of the ABP consists of distinguished pediatricians in education, research, and clinical practice, as well as one or more non-physicians who have a professional interest in the health and welfare of children. The ABP strives to improve training, establishes the requirements for certification, and creates and sets the standards for its examinations.

The ABP awards certificates in General Pediatrics and in the following subspecialty areas: Adolescent Medicine, Cardiology, Critical Care Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology-Oncology, Infectious Diseases, Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, Nephrology, Pulmonology, and Rheumatology. Certificates are awarded in conjunction with other specialty boards in the areas of Clinical Laboratory Immunology, Medical Toxicology, and Sports Medicine.

The ABP has awarded more than 55,000 certificates in General Pediatrics and nearly 10,000 certificates in pediatric subspecialties.