

## Referral Organizations

Local and national referral organizations are also a good source for finding doctors with certain specialties who practice near you. These organizations provide recommendations for their member doctors.

### **Arizona Medical Association (ArMA)**

810 W. Bethany Home Road  
Phoenix, Arizona 85013  
(602) 246-8901/(800) 482-3480 (toll-free)  
Website: [www.azmedassn.org](http://www.azmedassn.org)

### **Maricopa County Medical Society (MCMS)**

MCMS Referral Line: (602) 252-2844  
Website: [www.medical-society.com](http://www.medical-society.com)

### **Pima County Medical Society**

5199 East Farness Drive  
Tucson, Arizona 85712  
(520) 795-7985  
Website: [www.pimamedicalsociety.org](http://www.pimamedicalsociety.org)

### **American Medical Association (AMA)**

515 North State Street  
Chicago, IL 60610  
Phone: (800) 621-8335 (toll-free)  
Website: [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org)

## Arizona Medical Board

# Choosing A Doctor

What to Ask and Where  
to Find Reliable  
Information



Arizona Medical Board  
9545 East Doubletree Ranch Road  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85258

Phone: (480) 551-2700  
Toll-Free: (877) 255-2212  
Fax: (480) 551-2704  
E-mail: [questions@azmd.gov](mailto:questions@azmd.gov)  
Website: [www.azmd.gov](http://www.azmd.gov)

# Choosing A Doctor

## What to Ask and Where to Find Reliable Information



When choosing the right doctor for you or your family, it's important to find someone who is well trained, trustworthy and competent. Choosing a good doctor starts with looking for characteristics that meet your needs. Here are some initial points for your consideration:

- **Board certification.** Board certified doctors have extra training after medical school to become specialists in a field of medicine such as family practice, internal medicine, or geriatrics.
- **Communication style.** Communication is key to good health care. You want a doctor who will listen to your concerns, answer your questions, and explain things clearly and fully.
- **Health insurance.** Make sure your doctor accepts your health insurance before making an appointment.
- **Location of office.** Will it be easy for you to get there?

- **Lab work.** Is lab work taken at the doctor's office or at another location?
- **Medical insurance claims.** Will the doctor's office staff process claims for you?
- **Hospitals.** With which hospitals does the doctor have privileges?
- **Coverage.** Who covers for the doctor if the doctor is out of town or not available?
- **Sharing information.** With your permission, will the doctor share your medical information with a family members?

## Primary Care Doctors

There are several options to consider when choosing a primary care doctor. You might want to consider a general or family practitioner, an internist, or a geriatrician. Each practitioner specializes in a different area of primary medical care.

- **General Practitioners** provide health care for a wide range of medical problems. They do not focus on any one area of medicine.
- **Family Practitioners** are similar to general practitioners, with extra training to focus on health care for all family members, regardless of age.

— **Internists** are for adults. Some internists take additional training to become specialists. For example, cardiologists are internists who specialize in diseases of the heart.

— **Geriatricians** specialize in the care of older adults. A geriatrician is trained in family practice or internal medicine, but has additional training in caring for older people.

## Finding a New Doctor

After you decide what kind of primary care doctor to see, it's time to find the right doctor for your and your family. Start by looking at the lists of doctors available through your health insurance plan. Ask friends, family and co-workers for recommendations. Once you have narrowed the list, call the offices of doctors who present as a strong possibility to you and ask if they are accepting new patients. Finally, call the **Arizona Medical Board** at (480) 551-2700 or visit the Board's website, [www.azmdboard.org](http://www.azmdboard.org), to gather more information about the number of years the doctor has practiced in Arizona, where the doctor went to medical school, if there are any open complaints against the doctor and whether the Board took disciplinary action against the doctor's license.

