

Ask the Pediatrician: Should I take my children to the pediatrician during the pandemic?

8 February 2021, by Jennifer Shu, American Academy Of Pediatrics



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Is it really necessary to take my kids to the pediatrician in the middle of a pandemic?

Yes. If you have put off doctor visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, now is a good time to visit your pediatrician and get caught up. Children and teens need regular checkups with their doctor to make sure their development is on track, to talk about nutrition and behavior, and to get the vaccines they need to stay healthy.

It's necessary, and your pediatrician wants to see your child or [children](#). Pediatric appointments have dropped off during the [pandemic](#), which means many children are missing vital vaccinations, physical exams, screenings and other needed care.

If your children are behind on care, please call your pediatrician. Pediatrician's offices are taking extra steps to protect against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. If you have questions

about safety protocols, call the office and ask.

During the pandemic, making sure your children stay up to date on their immunizations is more important than ever. Your children should get a flu shot as soon as possible to prevent the spread of influenza on top of the COVID-19 pandemic, if they haven't had one already.

Staying caught-up on other childhood vaccinations is also vital to keep your children healthy and prevent new outbreaks of dangerous diseases.

In addition to recommended immunizations, there are other reasons why your children should visit the pediatrician's office:

- Newborn visits after a having a baby
- Adolescent health concerns, such as menstrual care and depression screening—For routine lead testing
- For hearing and vision screenings
- To monitor growth, [blood pressure](#) and other vital signs—To check labs such as for anemia
- For physical examinations before [team sports](#) or other activities
- To get approval and guidance for a return to sports, if your child had COVID-19
- To check on developmental milestones
- To treat infections or injuries

Your pediatrician is there to answer any questions you may have about your children's health. If you are concerned about specific symptoms or other issues, make a call to find out the best course of action. If it's an emergency, however, dial 911.

For some appointments, many pediatricians offer video visits. Call your pediatrician's office to find out if this is available and appropriate for the needs of

your child or teen.

To make visits safe, some offices have separated "sick" and "well" areas of their clinic or are having newborns come in early in the day before other patients. Your [pediatrician](#)'s office can advise you on the best way to come in.

Dr. Jennifer Shu is a practicing pediatrician and the medical editor for HealthyChildren.org, the website for parents from the AAP.

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