

10 Ways to Find a Family Doctor

Family doctors play an important role in helping you and your family stay healthy and get better. There is a shortage of family doctors in Canada. This can make it difficult to find a family doctor. It is never too late to start looking. If you do not give up and ask politely, you will be able to find a family doctor in time. Here are 10 tips on finding the right family doctor:

1 **Ask your partner or a close relative to ask their family doctor to take you on.** Family doctors are often committed to looking after a whole family unit and may take you on as a new patient.

2 **Search the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC directory for family doctors that are accepting new patients.** You can access it at <https://www.cpsbc.ca/node/216>. Check this website regularly as new doctors create listings.

3 **Ask a doctor you see at a walk-in clinic** if they belong to a group of family doctors. You may be able to connect with one specific doctor and see him or her regularly.

4 **Ask your local public health nurse, a specialist or other health care provider you are seeing** to give you suggestions. They may be able to refer you to a clinic or office in your area that applies to you or your family.

5 **Ask to be put on a waitlist for a doctor that is not taking new patients.** If a space opens up, they can call you. Check during the summer-not in busy flu season (November to January). In the summer, be prepared to see the doctor's replacement if the family doctor is on vacation.

6 **Look for a Division of Family Practice in your community on the internet.** A Division of Family Practice is a group of family doctors in a community that is working together with the health authority to solve health care problems including helping people find a family doctor. Special new programs may exist in your community or may be in development. www.divisionsbc.ca/



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7 **Contact your local university. Universities that train family doctors have clinics, and most accept new patients.** These clinics are teaching units: care is given by family doctors in their final years of training and by their teachers, who are experienced family doctors. Many other health care providers also work with family doctors at these clinics. There are two in Vancouver:

- www.familymed.ubc.ca/teachingclinics/ubchc.htm
- www.bcwomens.ca/Services/PregnancyBirthNewborns/MaternityAndFamilyCare/FamilyPracticeCentre/default.htm

8 **Ask if there are any family doctors within your faith-based community who may be able to take you and your family as new patients.**

9 **Connect with other women in your community and ask them how they found a doctor.**

10 **Join a family group such as a parent and baby group, a prenatal yoga class, a mom's fitness class, or children's activities.** Those are great ways to connect with other parents, who may be able to lead you to a new family doctor.