

## How to pick a provider: everyday care

Just like you'd do your research when choosing what hospital you prefer to have surgery at, you'd do the same when deciding what doctor's office to go to for everyday care. Maybe your previous doctor retired. Or perhaps you're new in town and know nothing about the health systems in the area. Or your child has a condition that requires specialty care.

You want to take your time and find a health care provider that's a good fit.

### General tips

Brandon Hedgspeth hears about these decisions all the time as manager of quality and safety for [OSF HealthCare in Danville, Illinois](#). He outlines some general things to consider when picking a health care provider:

- Is the provider able to meet my needs, such as care for a specific condition?
- Is the provider close enough to my home that transportation will not be an issue?
- Do I prefer a provider who makes a lot of small talk? Or would I just like to get the necessary information and go?
- Does the gender of the provider matter? For example, if you are looking for an OBGYN, would you prefer the provider to be female?
- Do I need my provider to speak my preferred language or will an interpreter meet my needs? Hedgspeth notes that federal law requires an interpreter to be used if a provider does not speak the patient's primary language. The interpreter usually attends the appointment via phone or video call.
- Do I need to be seen right away, or can I afford to be on a waiting list?
- What are my options outside of the emergency department if I need care outside of business hours?
- Is cost a concern? A call to your doctor or insurance provider could find out how compatible they are with each other.

### What to avoid

What about online reviews, such as what you see on the right side of your screen when you Google a provider? Hedgspeth says to be wary of using that information on its own. Like reviews in other sectors, you tend to see the extremes – someone who either really likes or dislikes a provider.

\*\*\*SOT\*\*\*

**Brandon Hedgspeth, manager of quality and safety at OSF HealthCare in Danville, Illinois**

**“My best suggestion would be to actually go in and visit and have an appointment with the physician. Make a determination on how you feel [about] them and the interactions you have with them.” (:12)**

You can find a provider on the [OSF HealthCare website](#).