# Pick a go-to doc to **quarterback your health care team**

**Health care can be confusing, so it helps to have a health care provider on your side, who is an expert on you.**

Your primary care physician plays a key role in your health and wellbeing. As "quarterback" of your health team, your primary care physician has a more complete picture of your current conditions and risk factors, as compared to using a walk-in clinic, urgent care or a variety of physician specialists on an as-needed basis.

This knowledge about "you" can lead to more personalized care and a trusting relationship with your physician – and save you time in getting the care you need.

## A primary care physician can provide:

► Routine medical care for a wide range of medical conditions

► Treatment of non-emergency illnesses and injuries

► Preventive care, including screenings and immunizations

► Referrals to specialists, when needed

► Assistance with understanding how the health care system works

### BE INVOLVED

When you develop a relationship with your primary care provider they get to know the "whole you" – and they will feel like a member of your health care team.

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## Doc tryout

Interview potential primary care doctors to determine the best fit for your needs

## When choosing a primary care physician, look for:

► Participation in your health plan network

► The type of primary care physician that best meets your needs (examples may include pediatrics, family practice, internal medicine, geriatrics)

► Communication styles

► Office hours and current availability

► Approach to treatment – conservative or more aggressive

► Suggestions or referral from other physicians and/or patients

## Benefits to having a primary care physician:

**Familiarity** – Seeing the same doctor helps you build a trusting relationship that fosters open communication and understanding for high quality, personalized care.

**Holistic approach** – Familiarity brings "whole person" knowledge of you that can only come from seeing you over a period of time and understanding your health history.

**Empowerment** – As an active partner on your health care team, a strong relationship with your doctor encourages you to learn about your health issues, ask questions and feel in control of your health and health care.

## Sources

**Mayo Clinic**
*The Importance of a Primary Care Provider*
(http://mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/
speaking-of-health/the-importance-of-a-primary-care-provider)

**MedlinePlus**
*Choosing a primary care provider*
(https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001939.htm)

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