



Health & Wellness Resource Center

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Pediatrics

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Definition

Pediatrics is a specialized the branch of medicine that cares for children from birth through age 21.

Comment [KM1]: (Sheila McElroy: Do not have a Microsoft word account.) Medical definition fits the idea I had in mind when studying pediatrics.

Description

Pediatricians care exclusively for children from infants through young adults. They practice **preventive medicine** in healthy children through well-child checkups to monitor a child's growth and development. They encourage disease prevention directly through immunizations and indirectly through education of both parents and children about maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Comment [KM2]: Serve as everyday doctors. Have a large impact on the lifestyles of children due to mediated check-ups

Pediatricians also diagnose and treat infectious diseases, injuries, congenital and genetic defects, and childhood cancers. They monitor children and adolescents for behavioral and

psychiatric problems and developmental delays. They are, by law, required to report any suspected [child abuse](#) or [neglect](#) .

Comment [KM3]: Must have a large psychological impact due to their role in mental development. Most likely a positive influence on a child.

As of 2010, about 13% of practicing physicians in the United States were pediatricians. Also, according to the American Academy of **Pediatrics**, as of 2010, 56% of board certified pediatricians were women, and about 20% of all board certified pediatricians were working part time (defined as 25 hours or less per week). In multiple surveys, pediatric is consistently reported as being in the top five medical specialties in job satisfaction.

Comment [KM4]: The job is emotionally rewarding. Constantly helping patients from a physical standpoint by preventing disease and from a mental standpoint by helping with mental development
- Must have a strong connection with the child to be successful in the job because it is reliant on the emotion between the doctor and the family.

The work of a pediatrician is more collaborative than many medical specialties. Pediatricians must work with parents both to maintain the health of the child and to treat disease. Primary care pediatricians are generalists who, when they suspect a problem, will collaborate with the pediatric subspecialist.

Comment [KM5]: Would be like working in many fields. Multiple forms of training is needed to be informed properly on areas of focus.

Board certified subspecialties in **pediatrics** include:

- adolescent medicine
- allergy and immunology
- cardiology
- child abuse
- child and adolescent psychiatry
- critical care
- dermatology
- developmental and behavioral medicine
- emergency medicine
- endocrinology
- gastroenterology
- hematology-oncology
- infectious diseases
- neonatology
- nephrology
- pulmonary medicine
- rheumatology

Registered nurses (RNs) can also specialize in **pediatrics** and become certified through examination by the Society of Pediatric Nurses. Several different certifications are available including, Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN) and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP) and [Clinical Nurse Specialist](#) (CNS) in **Pediatrics**.

Origins

For many years, children were treated as miniature adults. However, as physicians acquired a better understanding of the development and functions of the body, they became aware that children responded to drug therapy differently from adults and

sometimes needed different treatment or treatment delivered in a different way. The first known Western book on **pediatrics** was written in Italy in 1472.

Recognition of the special needs of children gave rise to hospitals specifically for treating sick children. The first of these children's hospitals opened in Paris in 1802 and still functions today. By the end of the 1830s, there were children's hospitals in Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Wroclaw. The first children's hospital in London was founded in 1852. The first children's hospital in the United States was Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, founded in 1855 and still one of the leading children's hospitals in the country today.

Purpose

The purpose of **pediatrics** is to keep children healthy, recognize and treat developmental delays and behavioral problems or psychiatric illness, treat acute diseases and injuries, and manage chronic diseases. Pediatricians also educate parents about normal childhood growth and development.

Comment [KM6]: Large range of topics but only specific to children; common ground.

Training and certification

To become a primary care (general) pediatrician in the United States, one must graduate from an accredited medical school, do a one-year internship and a three-year residency, and pass the appropriate examinations. Individuals who have successfully completed the requirements to become a licensed pediatrician can apply to specialty programs for additional certification. The amount of training varies among subspecialties but generally lasts two years. Various programs can reduce the time spent in training for pediatricians who wish to become certified in more than one area. For example, a four-year residency program allows a physician to become certified in both **pediatrics** and [internal medicine](#).

Comment [KM7]: This is specifically for the general level pediatrics. Does not include the specialists and their specific training.
- Ex: Pediatric Oncologist

To remain certified, the pediatrician must accumulate through approved educational activities a specific number of points in 6 core areas every five years and pass a written examination every 10 years.

Comment [KM8]: Forces the information to remain fresh. Keeps pediatricians up to date with research and new medical advances to best provide for their patients.

Registered nurses who wish to be certified as pediatric nurses generally work at a site that serves pediatric patients. After several years of clinical experience, they can take an examination administered by the Society of Pediatric Nurses, and upon passing, become a CPN. Advanced nurse certification for the positions of PNP or CNS requires a master's degree in nursing from an accredited university along with passing a national exam. The master's degree generally takes two years of full-time study.

Comment [KM9]: Pediatrics stretches from nurses to doctors. Both focus on preventing child health problems.

KEY TERMS

Hematology—

The treatment of diseases and disorders of the blood and blood-forming organs.

Nephrology—

The treatment of diseases and disorders of the kidney.

Pulmonary—

Of or relating to the lungs.

Rheumatology—

The treatment of diseases that affect the bones, muscles, and joints.

Resources

BOOKS

American Academy of **Pediatrics**. *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5*, 5th edition. Bantam, 2009.

Hay, William, and Myron Levin, Robin Deterding, Mark Abzug. *CURRENT Diagnosis and Treatment: **Pediatrics***, 21st edition. McGraw-Hill Professional, 2012.

Marcdante, Karen, and Robert M. Kliegman, Richard E. Behrman, Hal B. Jenson. *Nelson Essentials of **Pediatrics***, 6th edition. Saunders, 2010.

PERIODICALS

“DEVELOPMENTAL-BEHAVIORAL **PEDIATRICS**.” *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* 47.3 (2011): 156.

McMillan, Julia A. “**Pediatrics**: it's not just for kids anymore.” *Contemporary **Pediatrics*** (June 2012).

Mele, Cheryl. “Nanotechnology in **Pediatrics**: Science Fiction or Reality?” *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* 26.4 (2011): 379.

Shalowitz, Madeleine U. “What should be the research agenda for developmental behavioral **pediatrics**?” *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral **Pediatrics*** (July-August 2012): 504.

OTHER

What is a Pediatrician? University of Maryland Children's Hospital. March 29, 2012 [accessed August 27, 2012]. <http://www.umm.edu/pediatrics/pediatrician.htm>

ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, NW,
Washington, DC 20016-3007, (202) 966-7300, Fax: (202) 966-2891,
<http://www.aacap.org>

American Academy of **Pediatrics**, 141 Northwest Point Boulevard, Elk Grove Village, IL
60007-1098, (847) 434-4000, Fax: (847) 434-8000, <http://www.aap.org>

American Board of **Pediatrics**, 11 Silver Cedar Court, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, (919) 929-
0461, Fax: (919) 929-9255, abpeds@abpeds.org, <https://www.abp.org>

Council of Pediatric Subspecialties, 6728 Old McLean Village Drive, Mclean, VA 22101,
(703) 556-9222, Fax: (703) 556-8729, info@pedsubs.org, <http://www.pedsubs.org>

Society of Pediatric Nurses, 7044 S. 13th Street, Oak Creek, WI 53154, (414) 908-4950,
<http://www.pedsnurses.org> .

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