



## CHD Medical Professionals

[en français](#)

### About Medical Professionals

Children who are seen in a cardiac clinic will interact with many different health professionals. Here, we've created two categories: Health Professionals who you will definitely meet as part of your care, and other health professionals who you may encounter or who you may wish to seek out.

Every child's experience is unique. To support you on your journey there will be many members of your health care team, both when you are receiving treatment and throughout your lifetime of care.

Providers you are most likely to encounter:

#### Primary Care Physician

This is typically your child's family doctor or your child's paediatrician. She/he is your gateway into the medical community. The primary care physician manages your medical care, helps you to provide your child with a healthy lifestyle and directs you to other health care professionals at their discretion. It's likely that you will be visiting your primary care physician on a regular basis.

#### Cardiologist, Internist

Your child's cardiologist is a doctor who specializes in providing medical care for your child's heart condition. Your child should visit them for regularly scheduled appointments, and if your child's condition changes.

#### Cardiac Surgeon

A cardiac surgeon is a physician who is specifically trained to operate on your child's heart. You will meet with this surgeon if your child is being considered for surgery, or to follow up after an operation.

#### Nurse/Nurse Practitioner

These individuals, as well as other specific medical educators, can teach you and your child about the heart and how to keep it healthy. You will meet with them to learn how to keep your child's heart healthy, and whenever your medications or diet need to be changed.

#### Pharmacist

Whenever you need prescriptions filled, or have questions about how often your child should take medications, or potential side effects – you will talk to your local pharmacist.

Other potential members of your health care team:

#### Specialist Physicians

There are many specialist physicians who may be asked to help your child to be healthy and active. Often children who are seen in a cardiac clinic will also be seen by a nephrologist (kidney specialist), neurologist (brain/nerve specialist), electrophysiologist (heart beat rhythm specialist), lipid disorder specialist (for cholesterol), endocrinologist (for diabetes or other metabolic conditions), physiatrist (rehab specialist) or others. These professionals will provide you with medical care within their area of specialization. Visits to see them will likely occur only if your child's condition needs their expertise, or if special procedures need to be performed.

#### Physiotherapist / Occupational Therapist / Rehabilitation Nurse

These professionals can help your child to build strength, flexibility, and independence during your child's recovery after surgery and rehabilitation. You'll encounter them during your time in hospital, and perhaps afterwards for visits.

#### Kinesiologist or Exercise Physiologist

These individuals are experts at improving your child's health and quality of life through physical activity, exercise and physical movement. Being

able to play actively with friends is important for the mental and physical health of all children. These professionals can also help your child to plan and develop the skills and activity options that will help your child to be active, on his/her own or with your friends or family.

## **Registered Dietician**

Dieticians are certified nutrition experts who can help you and your child find and keep appropriate eating habits. For children who are seen in a heart clinic, there are often dietary changes required. Meeting with a registered dietician can help your child to eat foods that will help to keep your child healthy.

## **Psychiatrist / Psychologist / Social Worker / Case Manager**

Dealing with medical conditions can be difficult at times. This group of professionals can assist you and your child with the psychological aspects of your child's diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. They can also help coordinate your care and services. Your visits with them will be arranged when needed.