You take your child to the doctor when he or she feels sick. Do you also visit the doctor for routine check-ups? During a routine check-up, your doctor examines your child to make sure he or she is growing as expected. These visits, called well child visits, start a few days after birth and last until your child becomes an adult.

**How often should your child see the doctor?**
The American Academy of Pediatrics has developed a schedule for well child visits.

- **Infant:** All babies should be seen by a doctor right after birth. If the baby is being breastfed, he or she should be seen 48 to 72 hours after leaving the hospital.
- **Baby:** If you left the hospital before 48 hours after birth, bring your baby to a doctor in 2 to 4 days. Then schedule a visit when your baby is 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months old.
- **Toddler and child:** Schedule visits at 15 months, 18 months and 24 months. After that, once a year for ages 3 to 10.
- **Pre-teen and teen:** Have your doctor check your children once a year from ages 11 through 21.

**What will the doctor do during a well child visit?**
- Ask you questions about your child’s health history
- Perform a complete physical exam
- Perform vision and hearing screenings
- Check how your child is growing, eating and sleeping
- Talk about social or learning problems
- Give the child any needed shots (immunizations or vaccinations)
- Do a blood or urine test, if needed
- Talk to you and your child about how to stay safe and healthy

A well child visit is your chance to talk to the doctor about issues or concerns you may have about your child’s health.

**Tips to make the best of your visit:**
- Write down any questions or concerns you might have before the visit. If you don’t write them down, you might forget what you want to ask.
- Bring any medicine your child is taking.

**To learn more please visit:**

**SOURCE:**
SORE THROAT (PHARYNGITIS)

One of the most common complaints children have is a sore throat. Many sore throats go away by themselves. But one kind of sore throat, called “strep throat” or “streptococcal pharyngitis”, must be treated with medicine (antibiotics).

**Strep throat symptoms may include:**
- A sore throat that starts quickly
- Pain when swallowing
- A fever
- Red and swollen tonsils
- Body aches and not feeling well
- Swollen neck glands
- Sometimes headaches, throwing up, and belly aches

**How do you know if your child has strep throat?**
A sore throat can be caused by a virus or bacteria. Antibiotics will work ONLY against bacteria, not viruses. To find out if your child has a strep infection, your doctor will swab your child’s throat and test it for the group A streptococcus bacteria. If the test shows your child has strep, the doctor will give him or her antibiotics. No one, not even the doctor, can tell if a sore throat is strep by just looking at it.

**How you take the medicine is important.**
Your child must take antibiotics the way the doctor says. And be sure your child finishes all the medicine the doctor prescribed. Don’t stop just because he or she feels better. Antibiotics may:
- Reduce the symptoms
- Help your child feel better faster
- Prevent others from getting sick
- Prevent the sore throat from becoming more serious

If your child has strep throat, keep him or her home from school until the fever is gone, and until he or she has taken antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

**Prevent others from getting sick:**
1. Children and parents should wash their hands often.
2. Throw away dirty tissues used for runny noses and sneezes right away. Do not share spoons or forks, or drinking glasses. Before using them again, clean them with hot, soapy water.
3. Wash toys before sharing them with others.

If your child is sick, call the doctor right away. Find out what’s wrong and treat the illness so others don’t get sick.

**SOURCE:**
- Patient Education Center, “Sore throat (pharyngitis)”: http://www.patienteducationcenter.org/articles/sore-throat-pharyngitis/
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): “Worried your sore throat may be strep?”: https://www.cdc.gov/features/strepthroat/
THE CHALLENGE OF TREATING ADHD

Are you wondering how to treat your child who has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)? A big worry for parents is choosing the best way to help their child. Although it may be a challenge to treat ADHD, there are many ways to do it.

Your child’s doctor may suggest one or both choices below to help your child with ADHD:

1. **Behavioral therapy** – A therapist will work with you, your child and the school to set up a program to help and support your child.

2. **Medicine** – Your doctor can help you choose the best ADHD medicine for your child.

Deciding to use medicine to treat ADHD is not easy. Remember that ADHD is a real, physical illness like diabetes or asthma, and not just a problem with how your child behaves. **Medicine is one way to treat it.**

But, there is a chance your child may not want to take medicine. Here are some reasons why:

- Sometimes children don’t understand why they have to take medicine, so encourage questions. Being part of the team — with you, the doctor, teachers and therapist — can be a help and support to your child. As a team member, your child will be more willing to take part in the treatment.
- Other children may bully or make fun. Remind your child that all children are different and have their own challenges, like wearing glasses or having to use asthma inhalers. Come up with a plan on how to handle the pressure. Remind your child that you are always available to listen to and discuss any problems. **Be positive!**
- Sometimes children do not like the side effects of the medicine, such as feeling tired or not “feeling like themselves.” Talk to your child about both the good and bad things about the medicine. Ask your child’s doctor about what you can do about the side effects.
- Children often have trouble swallowing pills, or don’t like the way the medicine tastes. Speak to the pediatrician about the easiest way to give your child medicine.

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THE CHALLENGE OF TREATING ADHD

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Following up with the doctor is very important, especially if your child is taking medicine. Try to have a strong relationship with your doctor, and make sure to schedule the necessary visits.

- After starting the medicine, take your child to the doctor before 30 days go by. Talk to the doctor about any side effects your child is having with the medicine. Make your next appointment before you leave the office.
- After the first visit, plan at least two more visits over the next few months.

And as always, never stop giving your child a medication before talking to the doctor.

Although the decision on how to treat ADHD is not easy, there are people who can help you help your child have a happier life.

SOURCE:
- Current Psychiatry Reports, “Enhancing ADHD Medication Adherence: Challenges and Opportunities”: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3718998/
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill News, “Study finds children with ADHD have questions for their doctor but don’t ask them”: http://uncnews.unc.edu/2017/04/19/study-finds-children-adhd-questions-doctor-dont-ask/