

How to obtain appropriate psychological services for pediatric pain or other concerns

Who should I see?

Psychologists have a doctoral degree (PhD or PsyD). Licensed psychologists receive extensive training in how to conduct psychotherapy and conduct psychological evaluations. **Pediatric Psychologists** have specialty training in working with children and families who have acute or chronic illnesses (abdominal pain, etc.) and other health concerns that are impacting their lives. **Child Clinical Psychologists** specialize in treating children with concerns such as anxiety, depression, or disruptive behavior.

Psychiatrists are physicians with specialized training in the assessment and treatment of mental health problems and may prescribe medications for the treatment of psychological problems.

Social workers, counselors and **marital/family therapists** typically have a master's degree. Training may vary widely; it is important that you find a therapist who has experience working with the types of problems your child is experiencing. This provider list is not exhaustive, and there may be other individuals who are qualified to offer care in your area.

What should they do?

The provider should: 1) work with children and/or adolescents as a treatment focus, 2) have experience providing pain management (if this is the primary concern), 3) offer an intervention that has been shown to be effective for pain or other psychological problems (e.g., anxiety), such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

Where do I start?

In larger cities, there may be several providers to choose from based on your child's needs and the providers' expertise. However, in smaller towns and more rural areas, you may need to travel to a provider. To help locate a mental health provider in your area, here are some places to start:

1. Ask your primary care physician or pediatrician about who he/she typically refers to.
2. Call your insurance company for a full list of paneled providers in your area. This information may also be available on the company's website.
3. Contact your State Board for Psychologists or look on their website.
4. Use online search tools to find a provider from websites such as the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT).
5. Many areas have community mental health clinics. If they do not have a provider who is available or who matches your needs, they may be aware of other local resources.

What should I ask when I call?

- ✓ Are you accepting new patients?
- ✓ Do you treat children and/or adolescents?
- ✓ Do you offer cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for.... (e.g., pain coping skills, anxiety)?
- ✓ Do you accept my insurance? If so, what is the cost to me out of pocket each visit or copay?
- ✓ If you do not have insurance, clarify the out of pocket cost per session.

For additional information, please visit www.abct.org.