

What is a Pediatric Rheumatologist?

If your child has complaints of pain in the musculoskeletal system (joints, muscles, bones, or tendons), other symptoms of arthritis, or an autoimmune disorder, your pediatrician may recommend a *Pediatric Rheumatologist*.

What kind of training do pediatric rheumatologists have?

Pediatric rheumatologists are medical doctors who have had

- At least 4 years of medical school
- Three additional years of general pediatric residency training
- Three years of fellowship training exclusively with child and adolescent conditions and illnesses that affect the joints, muscles, bones, or other connective tissues throughout the body
- Board certification by the American Board of Pediatrics in pediatrics and pediatric rheumatology

What types of treatments do pediatric rheumatologists provide?

A pediatric rheumatologist works with a pediatrician or family physician to evaluate and treat a variety of joint, muscle, and bone disorders, including the following:

- Arthritis
- Autoimmune disorders, such as lupus, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, scleroderma, Kawasaki disease, post-infectious arthritis, chronic vasculitis, and inflammatory disorders of the muscle, eye, or other organs
- Evaluation of prolonged fever
- Unexplained complaints of chronic musculoskeletal pain, weakness, poor appetite, fatigue, and/or loss of function or skills
- Unexplained symptoms such as a rash, anemia, weight loss, or joint swelling
- Possible inflammatory disease

Pediatric rheumatologists may interact with other subspecialists (ie, pediatric ophthalmologists, orthopedists, surgeons, or nephrologists), or rehabilitation professionals (ie, physical, occupational, or expressive therapists), as well as social workers, psychologists, nutritionists, and/or orthotists.

Where can I find a pediatric rheumatologist?

Pediatric rheumatologists practice in a variety of medical settings including children's hospitals, university medical centers, and large community hospitals.

Pediatric rheumatologists—the best care for children

Children are not just small adults. Their bodies are growing and have unique medical needs. They usually express their concerns differently than adults. They cannot always answer medical questions and are not always able to be patient and cooperative. Pediatric rheumatologists know how to examine a child and understand how to gain the child's confidence and cooperation to the best of the child's developmental abilities.

If your pediatrician suggests that your child see a pediatric rheumatologist, you can be assured that your child will receive the best possible care.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

From your doctor

American Academy
of Pediatrics



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