



BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois

AVMA | LIFE®
Veterinarian Inspired Coverage



It's your
choice

Finding the right doctor

Taking time to find the right health care provider is one of the best ways to get the most out of your health care dollar. In fact, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, people who ask questions and take an active role in their health are happier with their care and see more improvement in their health than patients who do not.

When you need to find a doctor, take the time to research your options. Choosing the right doctor for YOU is just that — **your choice**. Here are some tips to help you meet your match.

Start with the network

- Health plans like Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO) and Participating Provider Options (PPO) use a certain group of doctors and health care professionals. This is called a provider network. Before you see a doctor, search Provider Finder® for doctors in your provider network. Finding a doctor in your HMO or PPO network may help keep your costs in line.
- Visit the Blue Access for MembersSM website. Check Provider Finder or call the number on the back of your ID card to find out which doctors are in your network.



Tips to narrow your search

- Ask family members, friends or co-workers for their suggestions.
- Check local resources such as network hospitals to see if they have a referral service.
- Contact your state's department of insurance and see if the doctors you are considering have had complaints filed against them.

Pick three or four doctors you like who are in your network. Call their offices and ask these questions:

- Can you reconfirm that the doctor is in my network?
- Is the doctor taking new patients?
- What are the office hours?
- What is the doctor's training and is the doctor board certified?
- How long has the doctor been in practice?
- Does the doctor or someone in the office speak your language?
- Which hospital(s) does the doctor use to treat patients?
- How long does it take to get an appointment?

Once you've narrowed your list, consider setting up appointments so you can get to know the candidates. Bring a list of questions and be prepared to discuss any concerns. Some offices charge a small fee for a meet and greet, but it could be well worth it.

Get started today to find the doctor that best meets your needs.