

# How do I choose a cardiologist?

Five things to do (or consider) when searching for the best heart doctor



## Talk to your primary care physician

A primary care physician can help you stay healthy and detect diseases in their early stages, when they are most treatable. The best way to avoid heart problems is to take care of yourself through diet and exercise, and by getting regular checkups. A primary care physician can guide you on what a healthy lifestyle should look like and refer you to a cardiologist in your community if you need one.

## Do your research

Where you go makes all the difference in the quality of the care you receive. If you do need to see a cardiologist, choose a doctor who is affiliated with a high ranking hospital such as Lenox Hill Hospital. Lenox Hill Heart & Lung is one of Healthgrades' 100 best heart programs in America five years in a row—placing among the top 5 percent in the U.S.

## Verify your insurance coverage

Once you have researched and selected a physician, call the office and speak with a billing representative. Let the person know which insurance plan you have, and ask what the cost would be for a consultation.

## Schedule a consultation

It's important to find a cardiologist with whom you feel comfortable. You should bring a family member or friend with you to help ask questions and gather information at your appointment. Discuss a course of action and follow-up plan. And don't be afraid to seek out a second opinion before making a final decision in choosing your physician.

## Be prepared for your appointment

To get the most out of the first visit with your cardiologist, be prepared. Come ready to discuss your personal and family medical history and bring any reports from prior cardiovascular workups, including electrocardiograms, stress tests and blood work.

**If you need immediate care, call 911 or visit your local emergency room.**

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To make an appointment with a cardiologist, call **(877) HEART-BEAT**.

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