

What is a Pediatric Plastic Surgeon?

If your child needs surgery to fix a deformity caused by a birth defect, injury, illness, or tumor, a *Pediatric Plastic Surgeon* has the experience and qualifications to treat your child.

All children become ill or injured at one time or another. Most problems are simple and can be solved by your pediatrician. At times, however, special care from a pediatric plastic surgeon may be needed and may make the difference in achieving the best possible cosmetic result. If you think your child needs this kind of special care, request a visit with a pediatric plastic surgeon.

What kind of training do pediatric plastic surgeons have?

Pediatric plastic surgeons are medical doctors who have had

- At least 4 years of medical school
- Three years of residency training in general surgery, or completion of a residency training program in general surgery, otolaryngology, urology, orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery, or a combined general surgery/oral surgery residency
- Up to 3 years of additional training in plastic surgery
- Additional training in pediatric plastic surgery
- Certification from the American Board of Plastic Surgery

Pediatric plastic surgeons treat children from birth through young adulthood. They choose to make pediatric care the core of their medical practice, and devote 50% or more of their time to the care of children.

What types of treatments do pediatric plastic surgeons provide?

Pediatric plastic surgeons generally provide treatment for the following:

- Birth defects of the face and skull (cleft lip and palate, misshapen skull)
- Birth defects of the ear (protruding or absent ear)
- Birth defects of the chest and limbs (misshapen breasts, webbed fingers)

- Injuries to the head, face, hands, arms, and legs
- Birthmarks and scars
- Burns
- Cosmetic surgery to improve a child's self-image

Where can I find a pediatric plastic surgeon?

Pediatric plastic surgeons practice in children's hospitals, university medical centers, and large community hospitals. Your pediatrician will be able to recommend a plastic surgeon that works with children. Your family, friends, and co-workers may recommend a pediatric plastic surgeon, but it is important that you meet this doctor and review his or her credentials. Check with the plastic surgery department of a nearby university or with the county medical society.

Pediatric plastic surgeons — the best care for children

Children are not just small adults. They cannot always say what is bothering them. They cannot always answer medical questions, and are not always able to be patient and cooperative during a medical examination. Pediatric plastic surgeons know how to examine and treat children in a way that makes them relaxed and cooperative. In addition, pediatric plastic surgeons use equipment specifically designed for children. Most pediatric plastic surgery offices are arranged and decorated with children in mind. This includes the examination rooms and waiting rooms, which may have toys, videos, and books for children. This helps create a comfortable and nonthreatening environment for your child.

If your pediatrician suggests that your child see a pediatric plastic surgeon, you can be assured that he or she has the widest range of treatment options, the most extensive and complete training, and the greatest skill in dealing with children.

American Academy of Pediatrics

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