

Patient information from BMJ

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Autism: questions to ask your doctor about your child

You will probably need to see several different professionals to get the advice, support, and treatment that your child needs.

Your doctor may be able to answer many of your questions about autism. But you may need to turn to other professionals too.

Here are some questions that you may want to ask:

- How do you know that my child has autism? Can you be sure?
- How do you know it's not something else?
- Will my child be able to attend a mainstream school? If so, is there any help that the school can give?
- How will my child's condition change over time?
- Will my child be seen by a specialist or be seen in a department with lots of experience in caring for children with autism?
- Is there any treatment that will help my child? Can I get help where I live?
- Can the treatment be harmful for my child?
- Are there other treatments that I would have to pay for?
- What sort of help can I get with caring for my child at home?
- Are there programmes to help me pay for child care, treatment, or equipment?
- Are there any local support groups for families who have children with autism?
- How can I help my other children to understand about autism? And how can I help them cope with having a brother or sister with autism?

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