

SEE YOUR DOCTOR

A Better Understanding For Everyone

(NAPSA)—They don't deliver babies, they don't treat children, and they don't do surgery. They do, however, play an important role in adult medicine.

The "they" in this case refers to doctors of internal medicine. Called "internists" or "general internists," these medical professionals have wide-ranging knowledge of complex diseases that affect adults.

The name comes from a German phrase—*Innere Medizin*—used to describe physicians who combined the science of the laboratory with the care of patients.

With in-depth training in adult medicine, an internist is often an excellent choice to help adult patients navigate the increasingly complex world of medical care. Internists serve as primary care doctors.

Often, internists care for their patients for life—from the teen years through old age. At least three of their seven or more years of medical school and postgraduate training are dedicated to learning how to prevent, diagnose, and treat diseases that affect adults.

An internist can treat you for something as routine as the flu or fatigue, or provide in-depth care for diseases such as diabetes, cancer or heart disease. Internists can choose to focus their practice on general internal medicine, or may take additional training to "subspecialize" in one of 13 areas of internal medicine. Cardiologists, for example, are doctors of internal medicine who subspecial-



An internal medicine physician, also called an "internist," is a doctor that treats adults.

ize in diseases of the heart.

Unfortunately, despite internists' valuable contributions to America's health care, many people are still confused about internists and internal medicine.

To help the public better understand the benefits of establishing a relationship with this kind of doctor, the American College of Physicians, the medical society that represents the interests of 115,000 internal medicine physicians, has adopted the identifier "Doctors of Internal Medicine—Doctors for Adults®." The organization hopes the simple phrase will help alleviate the public's confusion about internists and internal medicine.

To learn more about internal medicine and internists and how you may benefit from their services, visit the organization's Web site, www.doctorsforadults.com.