

DOCTOR'S OFFICE OR EMERGENCY ROOM (ER)?

How to choose the best place for health care.

Where you go for your care matters!

For most health problems, you should go to your regular doctor first. Your doctor gives you the best care because they know you and your health history.

Doctor's Office or Clinic

For a common sickness, minor injury, and a routine health exam, the best place to get care is a doctor's office or clinic. Your doctor can also help you manage your health over time.



Call your doctor to make an appointment for:

- A common sickness such as a cold, flu, ear ache, pink eye, sore throat, migraine, muscle ache, fever or rash
- A minor injury such as a sprain, low back pain, minor cut or burn, minor broken bone, or minor eye injury
- Bladder infection, genital pain or vaginal pain
- Health problems when you need advice
- Prescription refill
- To take out wound stitches
- Well exam, shot, and screening

If you are unsure about where to go for care, call your doctor first. Your doctor expects you to call any time there is a problem, even if it is at night or on the weekend. Ask your doctor what number to call when you have a problem and the office is not open.

When minutes count, call 911 for an ambulance.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency: 911

Local Police: _____

Police (non emergency): _____

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

Doctor: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Health Plan ID Numbers: _____

Notes: _____



Health care you can count on.
Service you can trust.



Hospital Emergency Room (ER)

The ER is **ONLY** for very serious or life threatening problems.



Call 911 and go to your nearest hospital ER for problems such as:

- Abdominal (belly) pain that is severe
- Allergic reaction that is severe (may include trouble breathing, swelling, hives)
- Back pain that is severe and does not go away
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Breathing problem that is severe, such as an asthma attack or choking
- Burn that is severe, or electric shock
- Chest pain or pressure (may include pain in the arm or jaw)
- Coughing or throwing up blood
- Drug or alcohol overdose (OD)
- Gunshot, deep wound, or other severe injury
- Headache that is sudden and severe (not a migraine)
- High fever that doesn't get better with medicine
- High fever with headache and stiff neck
- Injury to neck or spine (especially with loss of feeling or movement)
- Numbness in the face, arm, or leg
- Poisoning (if possible call the **Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222** for home treatment advice first)
- Rape or sexual assault
- Seizure, fainting, or loss of consciousness
- Sudden onset of: blurred vision, dizziness, mental confusion, weakness, or drooping on one side of the body
- Suicidal thoughts
- You are pregnant and suspect a problem
- Any other condition that could cause severe harm or death



If you go to the ER for reasons that are not an extreme problem:

- There may be a very long wait.
- ER doctors do not know your health history. You will need to see your regular doctor for ongoing health problems.
- You may need to pay and not get your money back.



After an ER visit, ALWAYS follow up with your doctor.

Your doctor will want to know what new meds you are on and what happened in the ER. Please show your doctor the forms the ER gave you.



Bring your list of meds to the ER and your doctor.

No matter where you go for care, be sure to bring a list of all meds you are taking and a list of any allergies you have.