

ER vs. Urgent Care

Knowing your best option when you need same-day health care services can save you time, worry and the cost of unnecessary services.

If you've ever spent time in an emergency room, you know that flu season can mean hours waiting with crowds of people suffering from the annual bug, as well as those with illnesses and injuries that may be better treated in an urgent care center (UCC).

of the sniffles. The guidelines at the bottom of this flyer can help you make the right choice when you need same-day health care services.

Conditions and where to go

An urgent care center can treat many common conditions, while others are more appropriately treated in the emergency room. Before you go, contact your local UCC and ask about its services.

After visiting either the emergency room or urgent care center, be sure to contact your primary doctor so your follow-up care can be coordinated.

Note: Please consult your *Evidence of Coverage (EOC)* for further information about accessing emergency rooms and urgent care centers in your area, as well as any copayments that may be associated.



Not sure what to do?

Call our Nurse

Advice Line.

A registered nurse is

available to answer

your questions –

anytime, day or

night. Just call

1-800-893-5597.

For non-life-threatening situations

Urgent care centers are convenient, economical and staffed by physicians. Benefits of urgent care centers include:

- after-hours care,
- no appointment required,
- typically shorter wait times, and
- ability to save money.

With the right information, you can make sure you and your loved ones get the best care in the most appropriate setting, whether you have a serious illness or injury, or just a case

If you feel that you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately or go to the nearest ER.

Urgent care centers	Emergency rooms
Cough, sore throat, respiratory infections	Any life-threatening or disabling condition
Earaches	Injury, with loss of consciousness or fainting
Back pain, body aches	Uncontrolled bleeding
Burning with urination	Sudden numbness of limbs or face, difficulty speaking
Colds, sinus infections, allergies	Severe shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
Eye irritation, swelling or pain	Sudden, severe chest pain or pressure
Sprains, muscle strains	Major injuries, vehicle accidents, stab wounds
Rashes, minor cuts, scrapes, wounds	Poisoning
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea	Sudden, severe abdominal pain
Animal bites	Vomiting blood

This information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please consult your physician for advice about changes that may affect your health.

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