



Know Where to Go

When people overuse the emergency room for illnesses and injuries that do not require emergency medical help, it can cost you more and can drive up overall healthcare costs.

The info below can help you seek the most appropriate type of care.

PCP or Urgent Care

Your primary care provider (PCP) knows the full picture of your health and can help figure out how a current problem fits in with other conditions you may have. If your doctor can't see you right away, go to an urgent care clinic (also called convenient care).

A PCP or Urgent Care is appropriate for:



Sprains or simple fractures



Pink eye



Dizziness



Vomiting or diarrhea



Cold or flu symptoms

Emergency Room

The emergency room (ER) provides immediate care to treat potentially life-threatening illnesses or injuries. It is not set up to treat long-term conditions, and the doctors won't know your medical history like your PCP does.

The ER is appropriate for:



Severely broken bones



Head, neck or back injuries



Chest pain



Bad cuts or burns



Stroke symptoms

Many health plans have a 24-hour nurse line to answer health questions and help their members decide where to go for care.

These are examples, not complete lists.

In a life-threatening emergency, you should always go to the closest hospital or call 911.