

When to visit your Primary Care Physician (PCP), Urgent Care, or Emergency Room (ER)

There are many situations where Urgent Care provides a better option than the ER. Approximately 30% of ER visits are not only unnecessary, but end up costing 10x or more than the services provided in Urgent Care.

Before facing new or urgent medical issues, you should understand the place of service to best meet your healthcare needs. The following table can be used as a guide.

When to visit PCP, Urgent Care, or ER:

<div data-bbox="258 709 375 810" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="175 823 457 873" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>Primary Care</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="139 890 492 1010" data-label="Text"> <p>(for scheduled appointments and select non-emergency needs, including 24/7 virtual visits)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="191 1050 443 1102" data-label="Text"> <p>Average cost: Least expensive option</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="751 709 868 810" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="678 823 945 873" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>Urgent Care</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="678 890 943 989" data-label="Text"> <p>(if PCP is unavailable and problem is NOT life-threatening)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="699 1050 920 1102" data-label="Text"> <p>Average cost: 2x Primary Care visit</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1245 709 1362 810" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1122 823 1485 873" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>Emergency Care</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="1159 890 1446 989" data-label="Text"> <p>(for life-threatening emergencies requiring immediate care)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1154 1003 1446 1033" data-label="Text"> <p><i>Call 911 or go to nearest ER</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1149 1050 1459 1102" data-label="Text"> <p>Average cost: 10x - 30x more than Primary Care visit</p> </div>
<div data-bbox="105 1171 444 1201" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Why to visit your Primary Care:</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="105 1205 503 1436" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine wellness visits • Monitoring chronic conditions e.g. diabetes or high blood pressure • Follow-up after hospital admissions or Emergency Department visit - within seven days • Non-urgent symptoms requiring a work-up to determine a cause </div> <div data-bbox="105 1522 406 1551" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Conditions treated by PCP:</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="105 1556 519 1955" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Flu symptoms (cough, fever, or sore throat) ✓ Rash ✓ Muscle strain or sprain ✓ Pink eye ✓ Sinus problems ✓ High blood pressure ✓ Diabetes care ✓ Asthma or upper respiratory infections/walking pneumonia ✓ Symptoms of Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) such as frequent urination or pain when passing urine </div>	<div data-bbox="599 1171 928 1201" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Why to visit your Urgent Care:</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="599 1205 1027 1350" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appointment required • Extended hours available • Specialized equipment and highly trained health care professionals to respond to most medical emergencies </div> <div data-bbox="599 1522 969 1551" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Conditions treated in Urgent Care:</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="599 1556 997 1713" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If your PCP is unavailable to meet your immediate needs, please visit Urgent Care for ALL conditions listed under Primary Care. ✓ Broken bone(s) </div>	<div data-bbox="1094 1171 1523 1201" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Why to visit the Emergency Room (ER):</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="1094 1205 1511 1350" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year • Severe impairment in one or more bodily function(s) • Severe dysfunction of one or more body organ(s) or part(s) </div> <div data-bbox="1110 1360 1500 1442" data-label="Text"> <p>Note: Please follow-up with your Primary Care Physician within 7 days of your emergency room or hospital visit.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1094 1522 1393 1551" data-label="Section-Header"> <h4>Conditions treated in the ER:</h4> </div> <div data-bbox="1094 1556 1511 1770" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Symptoms of a possible heart attack or stroke ✓ Symptoms of a serious infection, e.g. high fever and chills ✓ Serious injuries ✓ Heavy bleeding ✓ Broken bone(s) </div>