



GET SMART

Urgent Care vs. ER

If you've ever spent time in a hospital's emergency room, you know the most urgent cases are treated first, and your personal "emergency" could take several hours to resolve. As an alternative, if you or your child needs care right away for a medical condition that's not serious enough to be life threatening, you may want to go to a nearby urgent care center. At urgent care centers, you don't need an appointment and the wait will be much shorter than going to a hospital's emergency room. And treatment at urgent care centers is covered under your Medical Plan (a deductible, coinsurance or copay may apply.) Check out this [list of urgent care](#) centers in our area.

Keep in mind that if you believe your health is in serious danger, or you are concerned that you may have experienced serious damage to an organ or part of your body, dial 9-1-1 for an ambulance or seek medical care immediately by heading to the nearest hospital emergency room. Some examples of a medical emergency include:

- Major injury, such as a broken leg or large wound
- Heart attack symptoms: severe chest pain, shortness of breath, sweating, and nausea
- Heavy bleeding
- Bleeding during pregnancy
- Major burn
- Unconsciousness
- Difficulty breathing
- Poisoning
- Severe head pain or dizziness

So, be ready for that unexpected emergency—save the name and location of your nearest emergency room and urgent care center in your phone, post it on your refrigerator and make sure your family members know where to find it. This information could come in handy.