


know before you go

A simple guide to choosing the right place to go for health care.

	Conditions treated*	Your cost & time	
Emergency Room (ER) For the immediate treatment of critical injuries or illness. If a situation seems life-threatening, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Open 24/7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden numbness, weakness • Uncontrolled bleeding • Seizure or loss of consciousness • Shortness of breath • Chest pain • Head injury/major trauma • Blurry or loss of vision • Severe cuts or burns • Overdose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs are highest. • No appointment needed. • Wait times may be long, averaging over 4 hours**. 	
Urgent Care Center For conditions that are not life threatening. They're staffed by nurses and doctors and usually have extended hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor cuts, sprains, burns, rashes • Fever and flu symptoms • Headaches • Chronic lower back pain • Joint pain • Minor respiratory symptoms • Urinary tract infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs are lower than an ER visit. • No appointment needed. • Wait times vary. 	
Doctor's Office The best place to receive routine or preventive care, track medications, or get a referral to see a specialist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General health issues • Preventive services • Routine checkups • Immunizations and screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May include a copay/coinsurance and/or deductible. • Appointment usually needed. • May have little wait time. 	
Convenience Care Clinic Staffed by nurse practitioners and physician assistants. Treat minor medical concerns that are not life threatening. Located in retail stores and pharmacies, they're often open nights and weekends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common cold/flu • Rashes or skin conditions • Sore throat, earache, sinus pain • Minor cuts or burns • Pregnancy testing • Vaccinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs are same or lower than office visit. • No appointment needed. • Wait times typically 15 minutes or less. 	

*List is not all inclusive. **Urgent Care Management Monthly, November 2010.

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