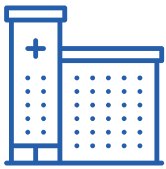


Choosing the Right Care

When to Use the ER, Primary Care, or Urgent Care

When you or a family member needs medical care, it can be difficult to know where to turn. Here are some tips on how to choose the right healthcare option, based on your illness.

Hospital Emergency Room



When to use: Hospital emergency rooms are designed to handle serious, critical conditions that require immediate, lifesaving treatment. This can include significant injuries from an accident, or medical emergencies such as a heart attack, stroke, or serious burns.

Advantages: Hospitals have the 24/7 staffing, equipment, and expertise required to treat serious, life-threatening injuries.

Primary Care



When to use: When possible, it's best to schedule an appointment with your primary care physician for non-emergency care. This includes common symptoms such as a cold, sore throat, abdominal pain, or sinus infections.

Advantages: Your primary care doctor has a complete view of your medical history, which is especially important if you have a chronic health condition.

Urgent Care



When to use: Choose an urgent care clinic for health issues that need prompt attention, but aren't life-threatening emergencies. This can include sprains, minor broken bones, flu-like symptoms, skin rashes, or abdominal pain.

Advantages: Urgent care facilities offer shorter wait times and lower out-of-pocket costs than an ER visit, with more extended hours than a primary care doctor.