Emergency Room Or Urgent Care

Which One Should You Go To?
Making the right choice could save your life.

When Should You Go To The ER?

Examples Include:
- Broken bones and dislocated joints
- Deep cuts that require stitches – especially on the face
- Head or eye injuries
- Severe flu or cold symptoms
- Sudden change in mental state
- High fevers
- Fevers with rash
- Fevers in infants
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Severe pain, particularly in the abdomen or starting halfway down the back
- Bleeding that won’t stop or a large open wound
- Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy
- Repeated vomiting
- Serious burns
- Seizures without a previous diagnosis of epilepsy

When Should You Go To Urgent Care?

Examples Include:
- Symptom onset is gradual
- You already know the diagnosis but are unable to get a same-day appointment with your primary care physician
- Conditions that are not life- or limb- threatening, but require immediate care
- Sprains
- Sore throat
- Urinary tract infections
- Mild asthma
- Rash without fever
- Broken bones of the wrist, hand, ankle or foot that have no obvious need to reset and have not broken the skin

When Should You Call 9-1-1?

Examples Include:
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Any symptoms of a heart attack including chest pain, pain in the left arm or the jaw, sudden weakness or dizziness
- Life- or limb-threatening injury
- Signs of a stroke such as slurred speech, severe headache, weakness or numbness on one side of the face or body, or loss of consciousness

About The Emergency Room

- In 2011, there were approximately 136.3 million emergency room visits in the U.S.¹
- The most common reason people went to the emergency room was stomach and abdominal pain.¹
- The average cost of an emergency room visit is $1,423.²

If In Doubt, Get Emergency Care!

¹Center for Disease Control's National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Fact Sheet: Emergency Department 2011
²Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Medical Expenditure Panel Survey 2013