

Where Should I Seek Care?

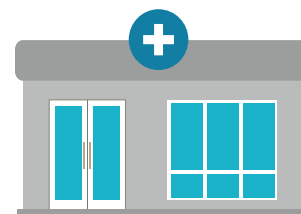
When you or your family member is sick or injured and needs care, knowing where to go can make a big difference – in how long you wait and how much you spend.

Primary Doctor's Office:

For health issues that aren't immediate or serious, waiting to see your doctor during normal business hours is often the best option – both in terms and cost and quality of care. Here's why:

- › Your doctor serves as your health care “quarterback” – they know your health history and can best dictate your needs.
- › Scheduling an appointment is quick, simple, and straightforward.
- › This option saves you the most money.

Cost: Low-Medium



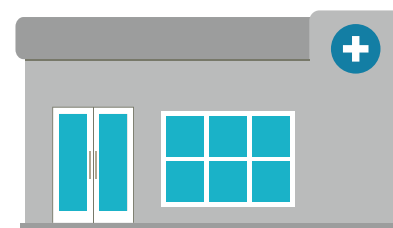
Walk-in Clinics/Urgent Care:

Walk-in clinics, such as urgent care and immediate care facilities are located in clinics, hospitals, or other health care facilities. They are typically open after normal business hours and on weekends. Visit these facilities when:

- › You have an immediate illness or injury that can't wait.
- › Your illness or injury is not life threatening.

If you visit an emergency department that offers urgent care services, a preliminary level of care (urgent or emergent) is determined based on your symptoms. In some cases, that determination isn't made until after your diagnosis is confirmed, which may result in a bill for ER services even though you entered through urgent care.

Cost: Medium



Emergency Rooms (ERs):

Usually located in a hospital, an ER is equipped to focus on serious medical emergencies.

Visit the emergency room for:

- › Situations that threaten “life or limb,” such as difficulty breathing, chest pain, seizures, head trauma, vomiting blood, a severe allergic reaction, or loss of consciousness.

Visiting the ER for a non-emergency well:

- › Result in higher costs than a visit to your doctor's office or a walk-in clinic.
- › Result in being cared for by a doctor you do not know and who does not know your medical history.
- › Possibly result in a longer wait due to: other patients with more severe symptoms being seen first or heavy ER use on that particular day.

Cost: High



Use our Find a Doctor tool to locate an in-network ER, urgent care, or primary care doctor near you.

Find a Doctor provides information on cost, quality, and availability. Search by: procedure, doctor's name, doctor's specialty, medical facility type, and more!

Go to the-alliance.org/Find-a-Doctor/

Health Care Needs Guide



Where To Go	What it is	Who Works There	Consider it For	Cost
Doctor's Office	The location of your Primary Care Provider who has your medical history on file.	Your Primary Care Provider who may be a general practice physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner.	Health issues that can wait for an appointment during normal business hours.	Low-Medium
Telemedicine*	Medical visit using telephone, email, Internet app, etc.	Physicians, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners or nurses.	After-hours non-emergency health concerns such as colds, flu, eye or ear infections, insect bites, poison ivy, or minor burns.	Low
Workplace Onsite Clinic*	A medical clinic at your workplace funded by your employer.	Physicians, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners, or nurses.	Short appointments near or during working hours. This may also be the same as your Primary Care Provider.	Low
Urgent Care Or Immediate Care Clinic	A walk-in center owned by a hospital, group of doctors, or independent investors that provides extended hours and is open on weekends.	A physician who specializes in family or emergency medicine; a physician assistant, nurse, or radiologist may also be on-site.	Problems that are urgent but not severe enough to warrant a trip to the ER, such as a fracture or deep cut that may need stitches.	Medium
Emergency Room	A hospital department equipped to treat life-threatening emergencies around the clock.	Emergency-medicine physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and specialists.	Situations that threaten "life or limb," such as difficulty breathing, chest pain, seizures, head trauma, vomiting blood, severe allergic reaction, or loss of consciousness.	High

*Please check with your Human Resources department to see if your insurance plan offers telemedicine or workplace on-site clinic options.

Sources: Consumer Reports 2015 & The Alliance