

# Urgent Care vs Emergency Room: which should I choose?

When you need immediate care, it's never something you're ready for. Sometimes it's difficult to know whether **Urgent Care** or the **Emergency Room** is the right place to go. Not only can this choice impact your health, it can impact you financially.



## Urgent Care

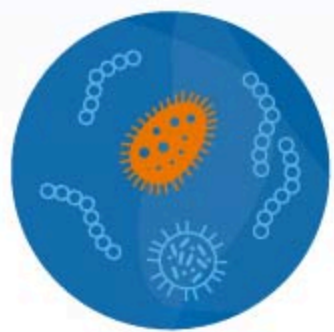
Urgent Care is ideal for when your doctor's office isn't open, and for treating your family's minor accidents and illnesses, such as<sup>1</sup>:



Minor fractures, sprains, and dislocations



Cuts or bad scrapes needing stitches or expert bandaging



Flu symptoms including nausea, high fever, body aches, sore throat and more

## Emergency Room (ER)

Choose the ER if you think you or a family member has a life-threatening condition, such as<sup>2</sup>:



Heart attack symptoms: chest pain, difficulty breathing, shooting pains down an arm or leg



Stroke symptoms: slurred speech, weakness or numbness on one side, loss of vision or difficulty balancing



Head trauma, severe cuts and abrasions with uncontrolled bleeding, serious allergic reactions

## When you should call 9-1-1 for help

If you think there's a severe life-threatening situation requiring immediate medical attention, it's time to call 9-1-1.<sup>2</sup>



### Call 9-1-1:

- + If a broken bone is breaking the skin or you're in a great deal of pain
- + If a cut is very deep and you can't control the bleeding
- + If you're unsure about the severity of the accident or medical event, especially in cases of a potential heart attack, stroke or poisoning

## Potential costs

ERs are more equipped to manage major health issues, so they typically cost more to use. And if it's an emergency, there's also the cost of the ambulance, which can often be \$1,000 or more.<sup>1</sup>



## Make an informed choice

Remember, the severity of the illness or accident is the best way to tell whether you need to go to Urgent Care or the ER. Minor conditions are best treated at Urgent Care and life-threatening ones require an ER.