



# Where to get care when you need it now

## What do you do when you need care right away, but it's not an emergency?

The last place anyone wants to sit and wait hour after hour is the emergency room (ER). And it can cost you more than you might need to pay if you could get care from somewhere else quickly.

You should know you have more options than just the ER.

## First call your primary care doctor

He or she is the doctor you see for most care. When you call this doctor, he or she will tell you if you should make an appointment with the doctor or go to the ER. Your doctor may even be able to give you advice on the phone or see you if it's later in the day or a weekend, so it's important you try to contact him or her first. Your doctor might even suggest you go to a retail health clinic or urgent care.

But when you can't see your doctor or if your doctor's office is closed, you can choose an option below. It often takes less time than the ER and costs about the same as a doctor visit. Plus, most are open weeknights and weekends.

## Choose a care option that could save time and money

**Retail health clinic** — This is a clinic staffed by health care experts who give basic health care services to “walk-in” patients. Most often it is in a major pharmacy or retail store.

**Walk-in doctor's office** — A doctor's office that doesn't require you to be an existing patient or have an appointment. Can handle routine care and common family illnesses.

**Urgent care center** — Doctors who treat conditions that should be looked at right away but aren't as severe as emergencies. Can often do X-rays, lab tests and stitches.

## Pick a care facility and call before you go

Ask:

- What are your hours?
- Tell them what has happened (for example, “I have a cut” or “I twisted my ankle”). Then ask, do you have services that I need?
- What age range do you treat?
- Are you a provider that is part of my health plan network?

## What you pay

<b>\$100 –\$250 *</b>	<b>\$10 –\$40</b>
<b>ER visit</b>	<b>Retail health clinic, Walk in doctor's office, Urgent care center</b>

\*Average health plan copays. For many members, deductibles and coinsurance may apply, which can make an even greater difference in the cost between an emergency room and alternate site of care.

## When to use the ER

Always call 911 or go the ER if you think you could put your health at serious risk by delaying care.

## Why not be prepared now?

You can learn more at [anthem.com/ca](http://anthem.com/ca) for:

- **Urgent care that's not an emergency** — Go to [anthem.com/ca/findurgentcare](http://anthem.com/ca/findurgentcare). You can even take a quiz to learn how to save time and money.
- **ER alternatives** — Go to [anthem.com/ca](http://anthem.com/ca) and click on **Find Urgent Care**. Click **Search for Urgent Care** and enter the information to find a facility near you.



See the other side for examples of when to go to the ER and when to consider other options. ►

# Deciding where to go

	Who usually provides care	Sprains, strains	Animal bites	X-rays	Stitches	Mild asthma	Minor headaches	Back pain	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea	Minor allergic reactions	Coughs, sore throat	Bumps, cuts, scrapes	Rashes, minor burns	Minor fevers, colds	Ear or sinus pain	Burning with urination	Eye swelling, irritation, redness or pain	Vaccinations	Cost
<b>Retail health clinic</b>	Physician assistant or nurse practitioner									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	\$10-\$40 copay
<b>Walk-in doctor's office</b>	Family practice doctor					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	\$10-\$40 copay
<b>Urgent care center</b>	Internal medicine, family practice, pediatric and ER doctors	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	\$35-\$75 copay

## When to go to the ER

Some examples of ER medical emergencies are:

Any life-threatening or disabling condition	Severe shortness of breath	Cut or wound that won't stop bleeding
Sudden or unexplained loss of consciousness	High fever with stiff neck, mental confusion or difficulty breathing	Major injuries
Chest pain; numbness in the face, arm or leg; difficulty speaking	Coughing up or vomiting blood	Possible broken bones

Options have different services and copays. Call and ask before you go.

Remember you have choices. If it's not an emergency, call your doctor first or the 24/7 NurseLine. The phone number is on your ID card. The nurse on the phone can help you decide what to do next.

If you are an HMO member, you should call your primary care doctor's office or medical group to find out your ER alternatives for urgent care.

Be ready for whatever comes your way.  
Learn more at [anthem.com/ca/findurgentcare](https://www.anthem.com/ca/findurgentcare).

At Anthem Blue Cross, we're always looking for new ways to save you time, money and help you get more value from your health care.

If you get care from a provider that is NOT part of your health plan network, you may have significantly higher out-of-pocket costs.

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