

Where to go for care

When illness, accidents, and injuries happen, where should you go for care?

If you're unsure where to go for help, call your primary care doctor.

Numbers to call for help

During regular office hours, call your doctor's office:

Dr. _____

Phone: _____

After hours, if you need help and are unsure whether or not you need to go to the Emergency Room, call your doctor's after-hours emergency line:

If you feel this is a life-threatening emergency, go immediately to the nearest Emergency Room.

This information is provided by:
Southern Illinois Healthcare Association

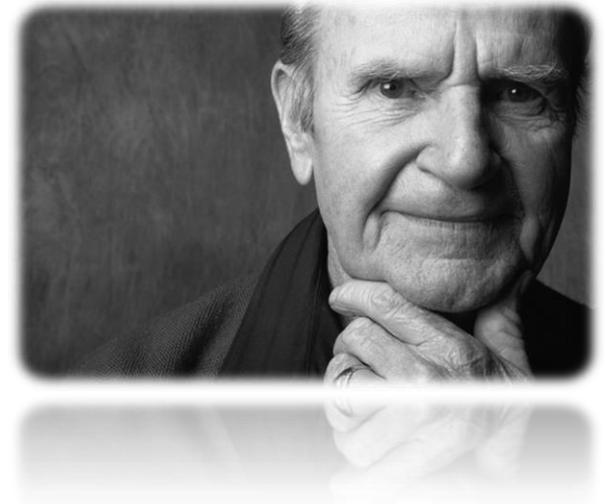
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**Doctor's Office,
Urgent Care Clinic,
or
Emergency Room?**

A guide to help you choose the best place to go for health care



Where you go for your care matters

For most medical problems, you should go to your regular health care provider first. You get the best care because they know you and your medical history.

Doctor's Office or Clinic

The best place to get care is a doctor's office or clinic for common illnesses, minor injuries, and routine health exams. Your doctor can also help you manage your health over time.

You should make an appointment with your doctor's office for:

- Common illnesses such as colds, flu, ear aches, sore throats, migraines, fever or rashes
- Minor injuries such as sprains, back pain, minor cuts and burns, minor broken bones, or minor eye injuries
- Regular physicals, prescription refills, vaccinations, and screenings
- A health problem for which you need advice

Usually open during regular business hours.

May have some extended hours and weekend appointments

Urgent Care Clinics

When your doctor is not available, urgent care clinics provide attention for non-life threatening medical problems or problems that could become worse if you wait.

Urgent care clinics provide walk-in appointments and are often open seven days a week with extended hours.

Always try to call your doctor's exchange before you go to an Urgent Care Clinic – he/she may be able to save you a trip and a copay.

When your regular doctor or health care provider is not available, you should go to an urgent care clinic for:

- Common illnesses such as colds, the flu, ear aches, sore throats, migraines, fever, rashes – that are causing you severe discomfort
- Minor injuries such as sprains, back pain, minor cuts and burns, minor broken bones, or minor eye injuries

Usually open extended hours into the evening and on weekends. Some urgent care clinics are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Hospital Emergency Rooms

You should use a hospital emergency room for very serious or life threatening problems. Hospital emergency rooms are not the place to go for common illnesses or minor injuries.

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, don't wait! Call 911 or get to your nearest hospital emergency room.

- Chest pain
- Severe abdominal pain
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Severe burns
- Deep cuts or bleeding that won't stop
- Sudden blurred vision
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Sudden dizziness, weakness, or loss of coordination or balance
- Numbness in the face, arm, or leg
- Sudden, severe headache (not a migraine)
- Seizures
- High fevers
- Any other condition you believe is life-threatening

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

No matter where you go for care, be sure to bring a list of the current medications you are taking.