

# Emergency Room vs. Urgent Care vs. 911

## What to Know Before You Go



### Emergency Room

There are a number of medical conditions that are considered emergencies because they can require rapid or advanced treatments only available in a hospital setting. Symptoms that are best evaluated in the ER include:

- Chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Weakness/numbness on one side
- Slurred speech
- Fainting/change in mental state
- Serious burns
- Head or eye injury
- Concussion/confusion
- Broken bones and dislocated joints
- Fever with a rash
- Seizures
- Severe cuts that may require stitches
- Facial lacerations
- Severe cold or flu symptoms
- Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy

### Urgent Care

Urgent care is not emergency care. Urgent care centers are same-day clinics that can handle a variety of medical problems that need to be treated immediately, but are not considered true emergencies.

Symptoms that can be evaluated and treated through urgent care include:

- Fever without a rash
- Vomiting or persistent diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Wheezing or shortness of breath
- Painful urination
- Cough and congestion symptoms
- Dehydration
- Moderate flu-like symptoms
- Sprains and strains
- Small cuts that may require stitches
- Sore throat
- Eye pain, redness, discharge, itchiness



### Call 911

Even if it's clear that you need emergency care, you may be unsure whether to drive yourself to the ER or call 911. You should never drive yourself if you're having severe chest pain or severe bleeding, if you feel like you might faint, or if your vision is impaired. If you're unsure about the severeness of your symptoms, always call 911. If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, call 911:

- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Pain in the left arm or the jaw
- Sudden dizziness
- Sudden weakness
- Numbness on one side of face or body
- Loss of consciousness
- Life- and/or limb-threatening injury
- Slurred speech and/or severe headache



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