Anthem



When you need care quickly

Knowing where to go can save you time and money

When you need care right away, the emergency room (ER) might be the first place that comes to your mind. However, the ER may not be the best choice in every situation. You have options when you have a sudden need for care, and knowing what they are can help you save time and money — and feel better sooner.

Where to go for care

Going to the ER or calling 911 is always your best option for emergencies. If it's not an emergency, you can see your primary care physician (PCP), have a virtual visit with a doctor, or go to a retail health clinic or urgent care center. This chart compares those options:[1]

PCP	Virtual care	Retail health clinic	Urgent care center	Emergency room
Usually available during normal business hours and may also provide medical advice by phone after hours	24/7 access to doctors through the Sydney Health℠ app, no appointment needed	Walk-in care clinics located in certain drugstores and major retailers	Stand-alone facilities, open extended hours	Stand-alone facilities or part of hospitals, open 24/7
cost[7] **$$** / average wait[2] **18 min**	cost **$** / average wait[3] **10 min**	cost **$$** / average wait[4] **30 min**	cost **$$$** / average wait[5] **30 min**	cost **$$$$** / average wait[6] **90 min**
Mild asthma, back pain, flu-like symptoms, allergies, fever, sprains, diarrhea, eye or sinus infection, rash, urinary tract infection (UTI), sore throat, earaches, bumps, minor cuts and scrapes, and other nonemergency symptoms	Flu-like symptoms, allergies, fever, sinus pain, diarrhea, eye infection, rash, UTI	They help ensure tests Sore throat, earaches, bumps, minor cuts and scrapes, UTI	Sprain and strains, nausea, diarrhea, ear or sinus pain, minor allergic reactions, cough, sore throat, minor headache, UTI	Signs of a heart attack (chest pain) or stroke (sudden numbness and slurred speech), difficulty breathing, and severe burn or bleeding – and any other symptoms where it is reasonable to think you are having a life-threatening emergency or your health is in serious jeopardy



How to find the care you need:

1. Go to **anthem.com or download the Sydney Health mobile app from the App Store® or Google Play™.** Then, log in to:
   - Find a doctor if you don't have a PCP.
   - Have a virtual visit with a doctor using the Sydney Health℠ mobile app.
   - Find a retail health clinic, urgent care center, or ER.
2. Choose **Find Care** and follow the steps.

Did you know?

The average total cost of an ER visit can be up to **10 times** more than an urgent care center visit. ER wait time is usually about **three times** more than at an urgent care center.[8]

Learn more about your healthcare options

Use your phone's camera to scan this QR code.

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Sources:
1 The care options and list of symptoms are not all-inclusive. If possible, consult your PCP for more guidance.
2 Business Wire: *9th Annual Vitals Wait Time Report Released* (accessed July 2021): businesswire.com.
3 LiveHealth Online, internal data 2020.
4 Healthcare Finance: *Patient wait times show notable impact on satisfaction scores, Vitals study shows* (accessed July 2021): healthcarefinancenews.com.
5 Urgent Care Association: *UCA 2019 Benchmarking Report* (accessed July 2021): ucaoa.org.
6 Harvard Business Review: *To Reduce Emergency Room Wait Times, Tie Them to Payments* (accessed July 2021): hbr.org.
7 Costs are ranked according to the member's estimated out-of-pocket costs and average health plan copays. Each plan may have different costs. Nonemergency care outside of your network may cost more out of pocket or may not be covered at all. $ = lower cost, and $$$ = higher cost. Call the Member Services number on your ID card if you have questions about your plan.
8 Healthgrades: *Should You Go to the ER or Urgent Care? How to Decide* (accessed July 2021): healthgrades.com.

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