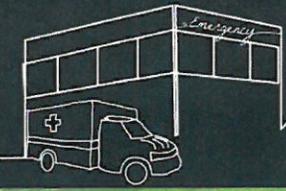




# About the Emergency Room



In 2009, there were approximately 136 million emergency room visits in the U.S.



The most common reason people went to the emergency room was stomach and abdominal pain.



The average cost of an emergency room visit is \$1,318.

## WHEN SHOULD YOU GO TO THE ER?

- Broken bones and dislocated joints
- Deep cuts that require stitches – especially on the face
- Head or eye injuries
- Severe flu or cold symptoms
- Sudden change in mental state
- High fevers
- Fevers accompanied by rash
- Fevers in infants
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Severe pain, particularly in the abdomen or starting halfway down the back
- Bleeding that won't stop or a large open wound
- Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy
- Repeated vomiting
- Serious burns
- Seizures without a previous diagnosis of epilepsy



## WHEN SHOULD YOU GO TO URGENT CARE?

- Symptom onset is gradual
- You already know the diagnosis, but are unable to get a same-day appointment with your primary care physician
- Conditions that are not life- or limb-threatening, but require immediate care
- Sprains
- Sore throat
- Urinary tract infections
- Mild asthma
- Rash without fever
- Broken bones of the wrist, hand, ankle or foot that have no obvious need to reset and have not broken the skin

## WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL 9-1-1?

Don't fight traffic to get to the ER for these symptoms. Call 9-1-1!



Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing



Signs of a stroke such as numbness, slurred speech, severe headache, weakness on one side of the face or loss of consciousness



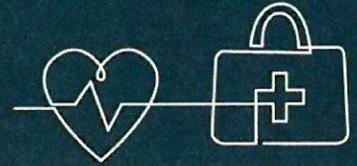
Any symptoms of a heart attack, including: chest pain, pain in the left arm or the jaw, sudden weakness or dizziness



Life- or limb-threatening injury



# Emergency Room or Urgent Care?



## Which one should you go to?

### *Not sure whether you need to go to urgent care or the ER?*

#### **Making the right choice could save your life.**

When an emergency strikes, you know you need medical care fast. But what if you're not sure if it's a true emergency? How can you tell if what you or a loved one is experiencing should have you rushing to the ER?

Before you find yourself sitting for hours in a hospital emergency room, or end up with medical fees that are not fully covered by your health plan, here are some things you should know before you or your family member need immediate medical care.

#### **ER vs UC**

While both urgent and emergency care situations are serious, there are important distinctions between the two. Here are a few basic guidelines for determining whether your medical condition is an emergency, or simply a condition that needs immediate attention. If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then you need emergency care:

1. Are my symptoms severe and/or life threatening?
2. Did the symptoms occur suddenly and unexpectedly?
3. Is there excessive bleeding, extreme pain or broken bones?

#### **WHAT TYPES OF CONDITIONS MAY BE INCLUDED UNDER URGENT CARE?**

Urgent care conditions include, but are not limited to; earache, sore throat, rash, sprained ankle, flu and fever not higher than 104°. Basically, urgent care is for medical symptoms, pain or conditions that require immediate medical attention, but are not severe or life-threatening, and do not require use of a hospital or emergency room.

A study conducted by the National Center for Health statistics found that of patients who had visited the emergency room but were not admitted to the hospital, [48 percent went there because their doctor's office was not open](#). Many physicians' offices are now offering same day appointments for care, but urgent care is an option for when appointments are unavailable or if you need treatment outside of office hours.

Don't know which Urgent Care Centers are covered under the MEBC Health Insurance policy? Go to [www.umr.com](http://www.umr.com) to find a provider near you.

# MEBC