

Emergency Room or Urgent Care?

Many people use the emergency room as a place to receive after-hours care for minor illnesses or injuries without realizing they have another option for far less cost. **In 2022, 14% of ER visits were potentially avoidable.**

The table below lists medical conditions that merit a trip to the ER compared to those commonly treated in an urgent care facility. **On average, a visit to an urgent care facility or family doctor (in-person or telemedicine) cost \$1,436 less than an avoidable ER visit.**

In addition to the cost factor, there are other reasons for going to an urgent care facility for non-emergency care:

- Wait times to see an urgent care doctor are typically shorter than those at an ER.
- Urgent care facilities can usually be found in nearby locations, such as shopping or business centers.
- Urgent care centers tend to be less crowded than ERs, so there's more space between visitors.

It's always best to visit your family doctor for non-emergency care... but if that's not an option, urgent care is the way to go.



Common Uses for Emergency Rooms & Urgent Care

| Emergency Room | | Urgent Care | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| • Broken bones and dislocated joints | • Severe burns or bleeding | • Animal or insect bite | • Fever over 101.5 |
| • Crushing intense headache | • Shortness of breath | • Back pain | • Rashes and minor burns |
| • Head or eye injury | • Slurred speech | • Cold, flu or sinus pain | • Small cuts that may require stitches |
| • Intense chest pain | • Weakness or numbness on one side | • Constipation | • Sore throat |
| • Open wounds | | • Dehydration | • Sprains and strains |
| • Seizures | | • Ear pain | |

Average potential savings per visit by using Urgent Care or a Primary Care Physician = \$1,436



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