

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 2024, 15% 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 \$1,608 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 • Crushing intense headache • Head or eye injury • Intense chest pain • Open wounds • Seizures	• Severe burns or bleeding • Shortness of breath • Slurred speech • Weakness or numbness on one side	• Animal or insect bite • Back pain • Cold, flu or sinus pain • Constipation • Dehydration • Ear pain	• Fever over 101.5 • Rashes and minor burns • Small cuts that may require stitches • Sore throat • Sprains and strains
Average potential savings per visit by using Urgent Care or a Primary Care Physician = \$1,608			