

When to Take My Child to the Emergency Room vs. Urgent Care?

As a parent, you never know when your child will need medical attention. These guidelines can help you be prepared when the need arises — giving you a better understanding of when to seek emergency room care or when to visit an [Urgent Care center](#). You should always call your child's pediatrician or family doctor first.

If you think your child is experiencing a medical emergency or life-threatening condition, always call 911. If you think someone is poisoned, call the Central Ohio Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

When Should I Take My Child To An Urgent Care Center?

You should always call your child's [pediatrician](#) or [family doctor](#) first. Urgent Care centers offer treatment for illnesses and injuries that need immediate attention, but do not need to be handled by the emergency room. Treatment for the following conditions is provided at an Urgent Care center:

- Minor cuts and lacerations
- Minor/small burns
- Possible broken bones/simple fractures (facility may perform X-rays and initial treatment)
- Sprains and strains
- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Asthma (mild or moderate wheezing)
- Rashes
- Mild allergic reactions
- Fever

When Should I Take My Child To The Emergency Room?

In case of a serious or life-threatening medical emergency, always call 911. Treatment for the following conditions is provided in an emergency room:

- Major trauma/injuries
- Injuries following a motor vehicle crash, being struck by a motor vehicle or a fall from a height
- Serious head injury (with loss of consciousness, changes in normal behavior, multiple episodes of vomiting)
- Burns with blisters or white areas, or large burns
- Obvious broken bone in the leg or arm
- Severe difficulty breathing/respiratory distress
- Fever in infants eight weeks of age or less
- Severe pain
- Seizures

Courtesy of Nationwide Children's Hospital Health e-Hints