

## Urgency and Emergency

To choose the right medical care facility, it is important to know the difference between an urgent care and an emergency room. Being able to differentiate between the care offered in each of these medical units will help you determine the appropriate medical care for your situation.

### Urgency

Unexpected health situation that does not represent a risk of death or disability, and that requires medical assistance in a reasonable period of time. If not treated in time, it can conduct to complications that do represent an emergency.



### Emergency

Health situation that represents a risk and endangers your life or others. It requires immediate medical attention and intervention, so you should call 9-1-1 or visit the nearest emergency room.



### Urgency Rooms



Urgency care rooms are usually located in clinics that offers outpatient care for situations that are not life-threatening. This facilities have doctors and nurses including access to X-rays and laboratories in site. Most clinics with Urgent care rooms offer extended hours, in some cases on weekends and holidays.

An Urgency care room can treat conditions such as:

- Ear pain and infections
- Minor cuts, dislocations, and burns
- Fever and flu symptoms
- Cough, cold and sore throat
- Animal bites
- Mild asthma
- Urinary tract infections
- Headaches
- Joint and back pain



### Emergency Rooms



Emergency rooms treat situations that put your life in danger. This facilities have doctors with different specialties, nurses, and the necessary equipment to be able to assist you in different events such as treating trauma, detailed computerized X-rays, or performing surgical procedures. Most hospitals have emergency rooms open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Visit the emergency room if you experience the following:

- Sudden insensibility or weakness
- Disorientation or difficulty speaking
- Loss of coordination or dizziness
- Convulsion or loss of consciousness
- Difficulty breathing, cough or severe asthma attack
- Head injury/Major trauma
- Blurred vision or vision loss
- Serious cuts or burns
- Heart attack, pain, or pressure in the chest
- Overdose
- Bleeding or vomiting blood
- Serious allergic reactions

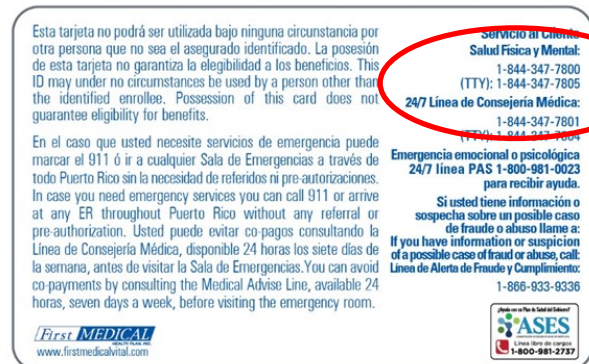
**Get ready now!** Before a health problem occurs, it is important that you know the following:

- Name and phone number of your primary care doctor or specialist.
- Nearest Emergency Room and Urgent Care Clinic.
- Have your Advance Directive document ready. This is a writing in which you decide the medical treatments you want to receive in case you are too sick to communicate. You can complete your Advance Directive document in the presence of your primary care physician, specialist, or hospital facility staff.

### Consult the Medical Advice Line

If you have any symptoms that you believe is required to receive medical attention, before visiting an Emergency Room, you can call the Medical Advice Line toll-free at 1-844-347-7801, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY/TDD users should call 1-844-347-7804. By calling the Medical Advice Line before visiting an Emergency Room, you will be exempt from paying the copay for services received during your emergency room visit.

Also, you are able to get the number on the back of your Vital Plan card:



### Don't forget your Vital Plan Card

If you have to visit an Emergency Room or an Urgent Care Clinic, bring a list of the medications you are taking, an ID card, and your Vital Plan card.

#### Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can manage any emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

#### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801 • TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

#### APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

#### References:

When to use the emergency service for adults. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000593.htm>  
 Urgent care vs emergency. (SF). Retrieved from: <https://www.cigna.com/es-us/individuals-families/understanding-insurance/urgent-care-emergency-room>

Prepared by licensed Health Educators.

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