

double ouch



Don't add expense to injury with a trip to the ER.

Go to an urgent care center for non-emergencies for care without the high expenses of emergency room services.

Your local Blue Shield contracted urgent care center (UCC) offers much of the same basic medical services as your doctor's office, often with extended hours. Staffed with licensed physicians, they are usually equipped to handle X-rays, stitches, sprains, and infections. They accept walk-in appointments, and typically have shorter wait times than the emergency room (ER).

Before you seek care at an urgent care center, you must always call your doctor's office each time you seek care. Your doctor's office must provide authorization before you go to the urgent care center. If you receive care at a UCC that is not affiliated with your doctor's medical group or IPA, your HMO plan may not cover the services you receive.

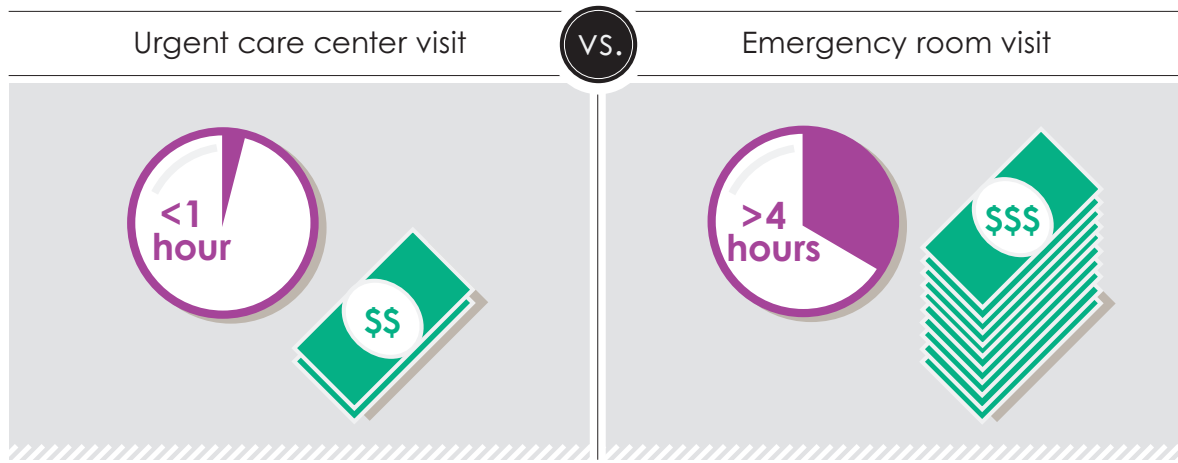
If you feel you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately or go to the nearest ER.

Savings

With lower copayment costs than ER visits, UCCs offer you quality care at lower out-of-pocket costs for non-emergency conditions.

Speed

In addition to the quality care, UCCs offer much shorter wait times. While the average wait time at a California ER is 4 hours and 34 minutes,* your wait at a UCC is usually less than an hour.†



The dollar signs above are 2011/2012 plan-year (or calendar year) copayments based on services provided by a Blue Shield contracted UCC within your Personal Physician's service area and a network ER where services did not result in admission.

* 2010 Emergency Department Pulse Report from American College of Emergency Physicians and Press Ganey.

† Johns Hopkins Medicine Health Alerts (posted November 18, 2009 and reviewed January 2011), Urgent Care or the ER – Which is the Right Choice? Retrieved May 31, 2011, http://www.johnshopkinshealthalerts.com/alerts/healthy_living/JohnsHopkinsHealthyLivingHealthAlert_3247-1.html.

Conditions and where to go

An urgent care center can treat many common conditions, while others are more appropriately treated in the emergency room. Before you go, call your local UCC and ask about its services.

Urgent care centers	VS.	Emergency rooms
Cough, sore throat, respiratory infections		Any life-threatening or disabling condition
Ear aches		Injury, with loss of consciousness or fainting
Back pain, body aches		Uncontrolled bleeding
Burning with urination		Sudden numbness of limbs or face, difficulty speaking
Colds, sinus infections, allergies		Severe shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
Eye irritation, swelling or pain		Sudden, severe chest pain or pressure
Sprains, muscle strains		Major injuries, vehicle accidents, stab wounds
Rashes, minor cuts, scrapes, wounds		Poisoning
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea		Sudden, severe abdominal pain
Animal bites		Vomiting blood

Don't wait until you're feeling ill

Your doctor's office can help you find the closest urgent care center you can visit. Make sure to write down the location, phone number, and hours and keep it handy. You can also go to our Urgent Care Center locator tool at bscurgentcare.com for more information.

Remember: Once you know the location of the closest affiliated UCC, you still need to call your doctor's office each time you seek care. Your doctor's office must provide authorization before you go to the urgent care center.

Smart tip: Enter the information into your cell phone for easy reference.