

Step out of the emergency room (ER) crowd **and into your local urgent care center**



When it's not an emergency, don't wait. Choose an urgent care center instead.

Have you ever needed to see a doctor, looked at the clock and realized you can't get an appointment but need to be seen soon? When it's not an emergency, visiting a local urgent care center rather than the emergency room (ER) can save you time and money.

Visiting an urgent care center can cost up to five times less than a visit to the ER and significantly reduce your wait time. While the average wait at a California ER is 4 hours and 34 minutes, urgent care center wait times are usually under an hour.* That means you can bypass the crowds and take your first step on the road to recovery.

Three ways to locate your nearest urgent care center before your next medical need:

- 1** Visit blueshieldca.com, log in as a member, click *Find a Provider*, and then select the "urgent care centers" option before entering your address and clicking *Find Now*.
- 2** Download the Blue Shield Mobile app for iPhone (through the Apple App Store) or Android (through Google Play) systems.
- 3** Call Blue Shield Member Services at the number on the back of your ID card and one of our friendly member service representatives will find an urgent care center near you.

Blue Shield Mobile delivers anytime, anywhere access to key health plan and healthcare services information. For more information on what the Blue Shield of California app can do for you, visit blueshieldca.com/mobile.

For more information, check out our short video on cost-saving tips at blueshieldca.com/CluesToSave.

* "Urgent Care or the ER – Which is the Right Choice?" Health Alerts, Johns Hopkins Medicine, January 2011.

Deciding when to go to an urgent care center or emergency room

Urgent care centers may offer different treatment services. Before you go, call your local urgent care center and ask about the conditions they treat.

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

Something is an emergency if waiting to receive care could result in danger to your life or permanent harm to your body. If you feel you're experiencing a genuine emergency, call 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.