

WHEN THE ED IS THE RIGHT CHOICE

Certain danger signs can be clues that the Emergency Department is the right place to go.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO in a medical emergency? And do you know how to recognize one?

"Urgent care centers are a convenient choice if you've got a minor injury or illness, such as the flu, minor cuts or an animal bite, and you can't wait to see your doctor," says **Bradley Pulver, M.D.**, medical director of the Department of Emergency Medicine at **Ocean Medical Center**. "However, when you have a life-threatening medical situation, you should visit an Emergency Department."

Read on for examples of when you should head to the nearest Emergency Department.



The Problem: Chest pain

When to Go: If you feel chest pain, it could be a heart attack. Call **911** immediately if you:

- Have discomfort in the middle of your chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back
- Experience chest pain that feels like squeezing, fullness or uncomfortable pressure
- Feel pain or discomfort in your arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Have shortness of breath
- Feel light-headed
- Are nauseous



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The Problem: Sudden onset of visual or balance problems

When to Go: Head to the Emergency Department immediately — especially if these symptoms are accompanied by:

- Face drooping
- Arm weakness
- Speech difficulty

These are all signs of stroke. The faster you call **911** and get to the Emergency Department, the more likely you are to prevent long-term effects from stroke.

The Problem: Allergic reaction

When to Go: Head to the Emergency Department if your allergic reaction is severe and you experience:

- Trouble breathing
- Hives
- Swelling

The Problem: High fever

When to Go: Get emergency or immediate medical help if:

- A fever reaches 105 degrees or higher
- Older adults have a fever not related to an existing illness
- Children younger than 3 months have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Children are having seizures, cannot be awakened easily, cannot walk or are having trouble breathing during a fever, or their fever lasts more than a few days

The Problem: Flu-like symptoms

When to Go: In most cases, you should stay home and avoid other people if you have the flu. But head to the Emergency Department if you have these emergency warning signs:

- Difficulty breathing
- Sudden dizziness
- Severe or continued vomiting
- Confusion
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but return with fever and worse cough

UNSURE IF IT'S AN EMERGENCY?

Don't delay seeking help if you think there's a chance your symptoms pose an emergency. Getting prompt treatment can make all the difference in your chances for recovery. 🏥

LIFESAVERS

With 12 Emergency Departments, Hackensack Meridian Health can handle any serious medical problem, anytime. For locations, visit [HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Emergency](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Emergency). In life-threatening emergencies, call **911**.

