



Catholic Healthcare West

Ask the Expert
Arizona Republic

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Q: If I need medical treatment fast, when is it appropriate to go to the emergency room and when should I go to an urgent care?

A: It is stressful when you have an urgent medical situation. So, having a plan and knowing your health care options *before* you have a medical emergency is a smart way to prepare for the unexpected.

If you have a potentially life-threatening situation, such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, severe bleeding, a severe allergic reaction, head trauma, loss of consciousness or blurred vision, you should head to the closest emergency room or call 9-1-1 immediately.

If you have a common illness or injury, such as a sore throat, an ear ache, vomiting, or even a sprain or broken bone, an urgent care is an excellent choice for care. Urgent care centers tend to be open when your doctor's office is not, typically in the evenings and on weekends, when an unexpected injury or illness occurs.

Catholic Healthcare West's (CHW) three Urgent Care centers, located in Ahwatukee, Gilbert and Queen Creek, are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., every day of the year, including holidays. Every patient is cared for and evaluated by a board-certified doctor and registered nurse, and each center has the latest diagnostic, laboratory and radiology technology available. Should your condition be more serious than first expected, the staff will coordinate the seamless transfer of your care to the closest CHW emergency room at Chandler Regional or Mercy Gilbert Medical Center.

Aurbinderdeep Sidhu, M.D., is the medical director of Catholic Healthcare West's Urgent Care in Queen Creek. To learn more about CHW's Urgent Care Centers, please visit chwurgentcare.org.