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 Hackensack Meridian Goryeb Children’s Hospital. “However, when you have a life-threatening medical situation, you should visit an Emergency Department.”

To familiarize yourself with emergency situations, 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.

**The Problem: Allergic reactions**
**When to Go:** Head to the Emergency Department if your allergic reaction is severe and you experience:
- Trouble breathing
- Itching
- 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 103.5 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. In life-threatening emergencies, call 911.