

Guide to Care Options at MedStar Health

Determine which type of care is most appropriate for your condition.

Primary Care at MedStar Health

Your primary care team can manage routine medical care, as well as acute injuries or illnesses which are not immediately life threatening. Some examples of this include the following:

- **Injury and illness:** Cold or flu symptoms, sore throat, nasal congestion, allergies, pink eye, stye (inflamed eyelid), rash, cough, musculoskeletal pain (e.g. back or knee pain), urinary tract infection (UTI) or yeast infection, STD symptoms or screening, mild to moderate asthma attack, stomach virus, migraine headache, concussion, minor cut, and minor injuries (e.g. back or neck strain)
- **Adult medical care:** High blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, depression or anxiety, fatigue, contraceptive management (birth control), weight loss, smoking cessation, cancer screening, and other medical concerns that allow you to schedule an appointment in advance
- **Pediatric medical care:** Routine well visits, vaccinations, asthma management, behavior concerns, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) management, growth and development concerns, and other medical issues that allow you to schedule an appointment in advance
- **On-site testing (availability varies by location):**
 - Urine testing (e.g. UTI or pregnancy)
 - Rapid strep
 - Flu testing
- **Lab testing:**
 - Testing of blood, tissue and other fluids (sent to a lab for testing with results in a few days)
 - Referral for X-ray, ultrasound or other radiology testing (performed at a radiology center)

[Find a primary care location at MedStar Health.](#)

MedStar eVisit (Online Care)

MedStar eVisit may be used for minor health issues that do not require a physical examination or testing. The following are examples of when to have an online consultation with a MedStar eVisit provider:

- Cold or mild flu symptoms, such as sore throat, nasal congestion or cough without trouble breathing
- Allergies, pink eye, stye (swollen eyelid), rashes, minor cut, known urinary tract infection (UTI) or yeast infection, gout flare-up, and other minor health conditions

MedStar eVisit is not appropriate if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Conditions that require a physician to look into your ear, listen to your heart or lungs with a stethoscope, or use other exam techniques to confirm a diagnosis
- Conditions that require in-person testing, such as a blood test or urine test
- Prescription refills for controlled substances (e.g. narcotic pain medications, ADHD medications or short-acting anxiety medications)
- Severe flu symptoms*

[Enroll in MedStar eVisit.](#)

(continued on next page)

MedStar PromptCare (Urgent Care)

You can visit any MedStar PromptCare location for same-day care or when your primary care doctor is not available. No appointment is needed. Urgent care is appropriate when you experience a medical issue that requires an in-person physical examination, testing or treatment. Examples of when to visit an urgent care center are as follows:

- Minor injuries such as a twisted ankle or knee, cuts requiring stitches, sore throat requiring strep testing, flu versus pneumonia diagnosis and treatment, abscess (boil), urinary tract infection (UTI) symptoms requiring urine testing, mild to moderate asthma attack, stomach virus, migraine headache, concussion, minor injuries (e.g. back or neck strain), and all the conditions listed in the “online care” section above
- On-site testing:
 - X-ray
 - Urine testing (e.g. UTI or pregnancy)
 - Rapid strep, mononucleosis and flu testing

NOTE: Prescription refills for controlled substances are not provided at MedStar PromptCare locations (e.g. narcotic pain medication, ADHD medication or short-acting anxiety medication).

[Find a MedStar PromptCare location near you.](#)

MedStar Health Emergency Department

Visit the Emergency department when you are experiencing a major or life-threatening issue that requires immediate testing and treatment. Examples include the following:

- Chest pain, difficulty breathing, severe abdominal pain, major head injury, heavy bleeding, severe dizziness or passing out (fainting or loss of consciousness), stroke symptoms, seizures, or other conditions with risk of loss of life or limb

Driving to the emergency room versus calling 9-1-1

- Do not drive yourself if you are experiencing a major or life-threatening issue, as the risk of an accident is increased.
- You may accept a ride from a family member, friend, taxi, or ride-sharing service if your life is not in danger and your condition does not require immediate intervention.

- Call 9-1-1 if your life is in danger or your condition is one in which every minute counts.

If you visit the Emergency department for minor conditions that can be treated by MedStar eVisit, MedStar PromptCare or primary care at MedStar Health (as noted above), you may have a longer wait time.

[Find the closest MedStar Health Emergency department.](#)

*What are severe flu symptoms?

Patients with severe flu symptoms should not use MedStar eVisit. Rather, you should be evaluated in person. The following guidelines will help you determine if you should be seen in person.

If you are experiencing any of the following:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or discomfort in the chest or abdomen
- Dizziness or confusion
- Persistent vomiting, not being able to drink fluids
- Dehydration with no urine output in eight hours
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then worsen again

If you are in one of the following groups:

- Under age 2 or over age 65
- Pregnant or less than two weeks postpartum
- Have asthma or another lung condition
- Have a chronic condition, including metabolic conditions (such as diabetes), hematologic conditions (such as sickle cell), or liver or kidney disease
- In an immune-suppressed state caused by medications due to a condition such as cancer or HIV

Knowledge and Compassion
Focused on You