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# Urgency or Emergency Always Be Prepared

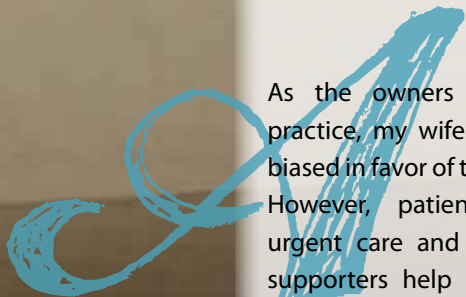


By: Terry Matthews, D.O.



# URGENT CARE

Why?  
Cared



As the owners of an Urgent Care practice, my wife and I are admittedly biased in favor of the Urgent Care model. However, patients who experience urgent care and become our biggest supporters help us to do what we're passionate about: Bringing top level medical care to the Lansing community 7 days a week, without an appointment, and at the moment you choose care. In the following paragraphs, I'll attempt to clarify what Urgent Care offers, when it's right for you, and how it differs from an Emergency Center.

Urgent Care is the fastest growing type of medical practice in the United States. We're an organized division of medicine (with fellowships in urgent care), and the American Medical Association recognizes providers that practice Urgent Care medicine via the unique distinction of UCM (Urgent Care Medicine). Many Urgent Care providers are collectively improving the delivery of Urgent Care medicine through an affiliation with the UCAOA (Urgent Care Association of America). Urgent Care Medicine concentrates on the evaluation and treatment of acutely arising conditions in all age groups. Urgent Care specialists often first diagnose chronic conditions, generally with referrals to primary care physicians.

Essentially, Urgent Care centers treat patients who have an injury or illness that requires immediate care, but is not

serious enough to warrant a visit to an emergency room. In addition, due to the national shortage of primary care doctors, Urgent Care centers bridge an important gap in providing medical services to those unable to see their primary physicians in a timely manner. While true Urgent Care centers will generally not function as a primary care office, these centers will often help patients obtain a primary doctor.

Urgent Care is an appropriate choice for you when you're experiencing a non-life threatening condition that you feel requires treatment right away. Routine illnesses such as sore throats, ear ache, flu, skin infections, urinary tract infections, and injuries such as lacerations, sprains and fractures are just some of the issues an Urgent Care center can handle. I personally believe it's always best to see your primary care provider for management of your *chronic* issues, as these providers know you and your conditions best. However, with the provider shortage, many patients are waiting weeks to see their primary provider. In these cases (and when your needs are more urgent) an Urgent Care center is the perfect choice!

And don't forget; the emergency room should be utilized for *TRUE EMERGENCIES ONLY!* Too many patients seek care at the ER for minor illness and injury. Not only does this divert the ER staff from managing true emergencies, it costs

us all enormously in the form of higher insurance premiums. In addition, co-pays at an ER may be 5-10x the cost of an Urgent Care, and your overall cost of care at the ER is often 10-15x the cost of similar care received at an Urgent Care facility! Finally, your wait time at an ER will typically average 4-6 hours. In contrast, our average door to door time is under 1 hour! The emergency rooms in our community provide a tremendous service to us all. Unfortunately, they are absolutely overwhelmed with providing non-emergent care. Give our local ER teams a break and save yourself valuable time and money by choosing your primary doctor or an Urgent

Care Center for all those non-emergency issues life brings your way.

Terry Matthews, D.O., UCM  
Owner, Lansing Urgent Care, PLC  
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### **About Dr. Terry Matthews**

*Dr. Terry Matthews graduated from MSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine and pursued a career in Urgent Care and Family Practice. His passion for providing health care in an environment that is focused on the total patient experience coupled with his determination to provide the highest level of care in an urgent care setting is today known as Lansing Urgent*

*Care. Dr. Matthews and his wife, Catherine, want to thank the Greater Lansing area for welcoming them and supporting their desire to provide a new level of Urgent Care to patients.*



### Lansing Urgent Care - Two facilities:

- 505 N Clippert St. Lansing - near Frandor Mall
- 2289 W Grand River Okemos - near Playmakers

# Quick facts

When you are sick or injured, it can be overwhelming trying to make a decision about how to get the best care for your situation. When accidents, incidents, and illnesses arise, finding the best type of health care provider for your needs can be tricky.

If you sprain your ankle during a weekend soccer game, should you go to the emergency room? Can your primary care physician treat accidental poisoning? And what exactly is an urgent care center?

The Greater Lansing area offers a broad range of treatment facilities to accommodate your needs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But to receive the best possible care, you need to make sure you're in the right place.

So -- when you need medical help, where should you go? Use this guide for suggestions.

## **Primary Care Provider**

Unless you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, a primary care center is the best place to start.

**What:** Primary care providers are physicians who deliver basic care for common illnesses.

They are your first stop for most undiagnosed health concerns.

**When to go:** You should visit a primary care center for illnesses such as colds, flu, and sore throats; minor injuries, aches, and pains; or routine health exams during normal business hours.

## **Urgent Care Center**

If your primary care physician is not available and you need quick medical attention for a non-life-threatening problem, visit an urgent care center.

**What:** Urgent care centers have similar resources to primary care facilities, but they provide comprehensive quality care on a walk-in basis with extended hours.

**When to go:** Go to an urgent care center when you need immediate medical attention or have non-emergency health concerns after hours. Examples include ear infections, sprains, simple cuts and burns, and eye injuries. Just walk in -- no appointments are needed.

## **Emergency Department**

Life-threatening emergencies and late-night trauma require an immediate visit to the hospital.

**What:** Emergency rooms offer inpatient care, emergency services, trauma services, and more. Emergency clinicians are able to recognize, diagnose, and make recommendations for a wide array of medical issues.

**When to go:** Call 911 and/or get to the emergency department at your nearest hospital whenever conditions cause severe symptoms and/or put your health at serious risk. Examples include heart attacks, poisoning, severe bleeding, and broken bones. Emergency departments at local hospitals are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you have any question about what to do in these situations, you can consult with your primary care physician; they usually have an after-hours emergency phone number.

# Take-Charge Checklist:



## Smoke Alarms:

- Have you installed a smoke alarm outside every sleeping area or in every bedroom on each floor?
- Do you test your smoke alarm(s) every month and replace the battery every year?

## Fire Escape Plan:

- Does your family have a fire escape plan prepared?
- Does each bedroom have **TWO** exits?
- Do you have an assigned meeting place so you will know everyone is outside and safe?
- Are emergency response numbers posted on all telephones?
- Do all family members know how to dial 9-1-1 for fire, police or medical emergencies?
- Does your family know the first rule in fire emergencies: **GET EVERYONE OUT FAST, AND DON'T GO BACK INSIDE?**

## Fire Extinguishers:

- Do you have a UL or FM approved fire extinguisher in your home?
- Do you take it out two times a year and shake it to keep the powder from packing?

For additional information on home fire and injury prevention, contact your local fire department. Go to [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org) for more tips on home safety.

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