

A Trip to the Emergency Room

Help Us Help You

No one plans to have a medical emergency—however there are things that you can do ahead of time to help make the process easier and faster once you arrive at an emergency room.



A Trip to the Emergency Room

The centralized location of Wichita Falls, between Amarillo and the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, makes United Regional the only full service hospital in the region capable of treating serious medical conditions and injuries. We consider it a privilege to provide emergency care for the region, and we understand the responsibility that comes with that.

In addition to providing excellent medical care for ER patients, we continuously strive to improve patient flow, wait times and other services associated with the patient's treatment. We also want to educate our community on things that can be done in advance of going to an emergency room that can help save time and make the process go more smoothly.



When To Go

to the Emergency Room

Some conditions for which you should go to the emergency room:

Loss of consciousness

Signs of a heart attack lasting longer than two minutes (may include pressure, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest, and/or chest pain with lightheadedness. In women, the symptoms could also include pain between the shoulder blades, pain radiating down the arm and nausea).

Signs of a stroke, which may include weakness or numbness in the face, arm, or leg on one side of the body; sudden dimness or loss of vision, particularly in one eye; loss of speech or trouble talking or understanding speech

Bleeding, that in spite of direct pressure for ten minutes, does not stop

Instantaneous and severe pain

Significant shortness of breath

Allergic reaction to a food, medication, or insect sting, especially if breathing becomes difficult

Poisoning - if at all possible, first contact the local poison control center. Request immediate applicable advice, since some poisons must be vomited immediately while other poisons must be diluted with water. Acting quickly in this manner can save a life.

Serious traumatic injury (*i.e., to the head*)

Unexplained prolonged stupor, drowsiness, or disorientation

Vomiting or coughing up blood

Severe or persistent vomiting

Suicidal or homicidal feelings

Neck stiffness or rash with fever

Some conditions which usually do not require emergency treatment:

Earaches

Headaches, unless severe or accompanied by stroke symptoms

Colds, coughs, sore throat, or flu symptoms

Chronic condition (i.e., back pain, knee pain) which has occurred continuously for several months

Fever – however, if in a newborn or if it remains high for a prolonged period of time, call your doctor or go to the ER

Minor cuts in which bleeding has been stopped

Sprain, sunburn, minor burn

Insect sting – unless experiencing difficulty breathing, which requires immediate medical attention

Animal bite – call your doctor in the event a rabies shot is needed

**Information compiled from the American College of Emergency Physicians Foundation.
For more information please go to www.EmergencyCareForYou.org*

Help Us Help You

While an emergency is, by its very nature, unexpected, there are many things people can do in preparation for an emergency room visit. These can be done in advance, so if you ever need to visit an emergency room, you will be better prepared and your visit will go smoother.

For your convenience, we are providing you with a checklist and forms to use in preparation for a trip to the ER. We suggest that you make several copies of these forms and keep them in your vehicle's glove compartment, purse, wallet, etc., so that you will always have them with you.

Emergency Department Checklist

Plan Ahead

Call your primary care physician first.

If you're not sure your condition is an emergency, call your regular physician who is most familiar with your medical history. Your physician may be able to recommend the best course of action, which may or may not include a trip to the emergency room.

Bring identification and insurance cards.

Always take identification and insurance information with you to the emergency room. This will help expedite the registration process.

Know your prescriptions and allergies.

Bring a list of active medications, dose and frequency, or bring the prescription containers with you. If you have allergies to medication or foods, or have specific illnesses, bring a list of these conditions so you can easily provide the information to the care provider.

Prepare this list in advance of an emergency and keep an updated copy in your wallet or purse. We have provided a pre-printed sheet in this booklet for you to use. Also, if you bring your medication bottles with you to the emergency department, don't forget to have someone (family member or friend) take the medications home for you to prevent loss.

Know the phone numbers and the route.

Be sure to include the phone number of your physician and the emergency department in your cell phone or in your list of important numbers. Also be sure of the fastest route to the hospital.

Bring a pad, a pen, and a friend.

A friend or family member can help you ask questions that you may not have thought to ask. Carrying a pad and pen will help you keep note of specific details such as doctor recommendations.

Patients are seen in the order of severity.

Just because you arrive at the emergency room before someone else does not mean you will see a doctor first. Patients are seen based on the severity or acute nature of their illness. Ask the admission or triage nurse if they can provide assistance with pain management, which may include ice or hot packs, pillows and blankets.

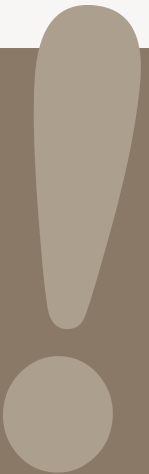
Prepare for the unexpected.

If you have young children, don't forget that you may need to provide all the necessary information and guidance to babysitters, neighbors, afterschool activity advisors, etc. If necessary, be sure the right people know if your child has special needs or severe allergies.

If your child is the patient.

If your child swallowed what may be poison, bring the bottle with you to the emergency room. Additionally, bring activities or toys to keep young children content while waiting.

Bring a list of active medications, dose and frequency, or bring the prescription containers with you.



Emergency Preparedness List

Before you leave for the emergency room

Before you leave for the emergency room, please be sure you have the following:

- ☐ **List of prescriptions, allergies, illnesses**
- ☐ **Pad of paper and a pen, comfort items for patient**
- ☐ **Identification card for patient and insurance policy holder**
- ☐ **Medical insurance card**

If poison has been swallowed, immediately contact your local poison control center:

Local Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222

Additional important information:

Primary Care Physician: _____

Phone Number: _____

United Regional
Emergency Department

- 1600 11th Street
- 940-764-2120

*The emergency department can also
be accessed from 10th Street.*



Emergency Preparedness List

Emergency Preparedness List: Medications, Allergies, Illnesses

Name of patient: _____

MEDICATION NAME	FREQUENCY	DOSAGE
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[illegible]

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS, VITAMINS, AND SUPPLEMENTS I AM TAKING:

MEDICATION NAME

FREQUENCY

DOSAGE

I AM ALLERGIC TO:

MEDICATION NAME

TYPE OF ALLERGIC REACTION

ILLNESSES AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS I HAVE:

*IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE ALSO NOTIFY:

NAME

CELL/HOME PHONE NUMBER

** This information will be important so the emergency department medical staff to know who to contact in the event the patient is unable to communicate.*



www.unitedregional.org