

We know you'd rather be home, and a visit to the emergency department (ED) can be stressful and confusing. You and your family are key members of the treatment team. If at any point you have a question, concern or need an update on your stay, please ask. We want your stay to be as quick and pleasant as possible.

ROADMAP to YOUR Emergency Visit

Start

Triage

A nurse will obtain your vital signs and get a brief history about what brings you to the ED. You will likely return to the waiting room.

Waiting Room

We hope your stay in the waiting room is brief. Sometimes you may see a patient go ahead of you; we treat patients by severity of illness/injury and then by arrival times. At any point, if you are feeling more ill or your pain is increasing, see the triage nurse as we realize your condition may change while waiting.

Treatment Area

This will be the area that a tech, nurse and provider evaluate you more thoroughly and start your treatment. You will often be asked to explain your history again and in more detail.

Radiology

Your condition may require X-rays, ultrasounds, CT scans or MRIs. Prior to a CT scan, you may be asked to drink contrast material. After finishing your contrast, you may have to wait up to an hour to have your test done, as the contrast has to work its way through your intestines. Sometimes the wait for radiology can be prolonged due to the number of patients requiring particular tests. After completing the test, a radiologist reads the images; this can take an additional hour for final results.

Labs/IV

Your condition may require labs. It takes about an hour for labs to be run and results to be returned. An IV may be placed to give you medication and/or fluids.

Admission

Your condition may require a longer observation time and/or specific treatments that require hospitalization.

Discharge Process

Your provider should meet with you prior to discharge to discuss the results of your tests, diagnosis, treatment plan and follow-up. Please ask questions. A tech or nurse will also meet with you to provide discharge paperwork and prescriptions.

Visitors

We want your loved ones to be involved in your care. Sometimes, due to your condition and the care we need to provide, we will limit visitors.

Hospital Room

After the decision to admit, it may take several hours for you to arrive to a hospital room. Delays may occur if the hospital is crowded, since a room needs to be available. For your safety, nurses only have a certain number of patients so sometimes a patient must be discharged from the hospital, or extra nurses brought in/moved from another floor, to accept an admission. In the meantime, you will remain in the ED to be monitored. Please let us know what we can do to make your stay in the ED more comfortable.

Pharmacy

Please pick up any medications you were prescribed. These medications are important to your treatment.

Follow-up

Your condition may require follow-up. Make sure you see your doctor and all referral doctors. These follow-up visits are critical to your continued treatment and long-term health.