

KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR HEALTHCARE – Consumer Guidance

*If your symptoms are life-threatening, call 911 immediately.

*If your symptoms are not life-threatening, call your primary care provider first.

Facility Type	Hospital Emergency Department	Urgent Care Center	Retail Clinic
What it is?	A hospital department equipped to treat life-threatening medical emergencies	A stand-alone walk-in medical center	A medical clinic located in a drugstore, supermarket, or department store with on-site pharmacy
Who works there?	Emergency medicine physicians, nurses, physician assistants, medical and surgical specialists	At least one physician, usually a family or emergency medicine specialist. Might also have physician assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, or radiologists	Advance practice registered nurses, physician assistants
What conditions may be treated there?	<p>A situation that threatens “life or limb”, examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chest pain • compound fracture • coughing up or vomiting blood • difficulty breathing • eye trauma • facial drooping • head trauma • high fever in immune compromised person • injury with chance of significant scarring • limb weakness • loss of consciousness • possible drug overdose • seizures • serious burns • severe allergic reactions • severe unexplained headache • severe bleeding • slurred or incoherent speech (other than routine alcohol use) 	<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken bones • cuts requiring stitches • flu • food poisoning • other conditions more serious than what a doctor’s office can handle but not requiring an ambulance ride to an ED 	<p>Common, non-life-threatening ailments, examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bronchitis • colds • flu • ear infections • sinusitis • strep throat • Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) • minor sprains and abrasions • vaccinations <p>Typically don’t treat children younger than 18 months.</p>
When is it open?	24 hours a day, 7 days a week	Generally, 7 days a week, occasional evening hours	7 days a week, occasional evening hours
What equipment do they have?	Full array of medical equipment available	They may have X-ray machines or on-site labs	Generally no specialized testing or treatment equipment available
Can they prescribe medications?	Yes	Yes	Yes
What forms of payment are accepted?	All payor types accepted	Some accept all payor types; others are limited. Check in advance if possible.	Some accept all payor types; others are limited. Check in advance if possible.
Who oversees this facility?	Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH)	DPH (licensed under a physician’s license, as an outpatient clinic, or a satellite hospital facility)	Retail clinics are not licensed, unless hospital affiliated