



EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

UPMC Northwest

Your Care. Our Commitment.

UPMC NORTHWEST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

A visit to the emergency department (ED) can be frightening and confusing, so we hope to make your visit as comfortable as possible. We want you to have the information that you need and suggest you read through this brochure explaining the process. Please do not hesitate to ask questions and let us know how we can make your experience better.

UPON ARRIVAL

When you arrive you will pre-register in the ED. A nurse will then conduct a brief medical history and exam to determine the severity of your condition.

Depending on the seriousness of your injury or illness, you may be taken directly to a treatment room, or you may be asked to wait until a treatment area is available.

1. Some patient treatment needs are best met at our main ED and others at ED West, an area of the ED for patients with problems that are less urgent.
2. The care team may order testing to expedite your visit prior to you seeing a provider.
3. Registration will be completed at your bedside.

Wait Times

Some common reasons for delays include:

In the waiting room

- A high number of patients arrive.
- Seriously ill patients arrive.

In the treatment area

- The care team needs to become familiar with your medical history.
- The care team is trying to get in touch with your primary care physician.
- The care team is waiting for the results of blood tests, x-rays, or specialized procedures. Tests generally result within 90 minutes.

If your condition changes, notify the nurse immediately.

Eating or Drinking

Please **DO NOT** eat or drink before you ask our staff. Sometimes you should not eat or drink anything because you may need a procedure or test that requires an empty stomach.

Restroom Assistance

We do have restrooms available for your use. If you need any assistance, please ask our staff to escort you. Also BEFORE using the restroom, please ask a health care provider if a specimen is needed to assist in your diagnosis.

Home Medications/Allergies

Please provide an accurate list of home medications, allergies, or herbal supplements to your health care providers so that we can ensure your safety and prevent interactions with medications during your stay. We will provide a card for you to fill out at home if needed.

Cell Phones

Please refrain from using your cell phone while in the ED so that we can promptly offer the care that you or others may require.

Personal Belongings

UPMC Northwest is not responsible for any personal belongings during your stay. Please have family take unnecessary belongings (including medications) with them to prevent loss.

Special Needs

If you or a loved one has any special needs, please let our staff know so that we can get the appropriate personnel involved in your care.

IN THE TREATMENT ROOM

Our physicians, advanced practice providers, and nurses are specialists in emergency medicine. You may be examined by an advanced practice provider if your condition is stable. They will examine you and create a plan of care based on your individual treatment needs.

Diagnostic Tests

- Laboratory tests and/or diagnostic procedures, such as blood work, x-rays, CT scans and ultrasounds, may be performed to further help diagnose your condition.
- Your emergency care provider must wait for all tests to be completed before determining your diagnosis.
- As soon as your laboratory work or imaging results are available, your medical care team will explain the findings. Occasionally, an additional test may be necessary.
- Your treatment may take a few minutes or several hours, depending on your illness or injury, the arrival of ambulances, and the presence of other critical patients.
- Please ask your health care provider any questions in regards to your test results.

Visitors

UPMC Northwest knows how important it is for family and friends to be involved and support you in your care, but for safety and privacy, the number of visitors is kept to a minimum. Every effort is made to keep your loved ones informed of your condition and allow them to be with you when possible.

Smoking

UPMC Northwest is a smoke-free facility. To effectively care for your health care needs, we do not permit patients to leave the department to smoke.

Pain Management

We adhere to the following guidelines regarding narcotic administration. Any exceptions to these guidelines are by physician discretion.

- If a patient frequently visits the ED and seeks relief from non-objective pain, they are considered to have chronic pain. For chronic pain, the ED does not prescribe or use Schedule II controlled substances, including:

- > Oxycodone and oxycodone combinations
- > Dilaudid
- > Morphine
- > Fentanyl
- > Opana
- > Methadone
- > Suboxone
- > Subutex

- Lost or stolen prescriptions for controlled substances will not be replaced.
- Letters from private physicians with pain management instructions will not be honored.

Leaving Without Being Seen

If you have been waiting a long time, you may feel tempted to leave the ED before you receive a medical screening examination by a physician or advanced practice provider. Please speak with a health care provider first, so that we can fully inform you of any possible complications you may face. Leaving the ED without being screened is a serious, perhaps life-threatening, decision.

AT DISCHARGE

- The nurse will provide you with a copy of your discharge instructions and any prescriptions written for you and explain them to you.
- The nurse will answer any questions about your care or treatment.
- Please schedule appointments and notify your primary care providers of your visit to receive appropriate follow-up treatment.
- Please take a copy of your ED discharge instructions with you to your primary care provider.
- If no primary care provider is available, we will be happy to refer you to one of our associated care providers.

Admission to Our Facility

If you need to be admitted to the hospital, we need to contact your physician or the covering physician. Please allow time for us to place you in the right bed the first time. There may be delays due to bed availability and hospital census. This may take minutes to a few hours to complete.

Immediate Concerns

If you have concerns or needs that cannot be resolved by your nurse or the ED charge nurse, please ask for the administrator on duty.

Our goal is to provide you with high-quality care and friendly service during your visit. In the next few days, you may receive a Patient Satisfaction Survey at home. Please complete the survey and let us know how we did. Your feedback helps us make improvements.

It is our pleasure to serve you and our community. Thank you for choosing UPMC Northwest.

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