

# Inside the Emergency Department

## Information for Patients and Families



View updated emergency wait times at  
[www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca](http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca)

Emergency Department hours of operation:  
Saskatoon City Hospital: 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
Royal University Hospital: open 24 hours  
St. Paul's Hospital: open 24 hours

### Who goes first?

The first thing that happens when you arrive in the emergency department is triage. **Triage** sorts patients according to the urgency of their **physical or mental** need for care. Those with the most immediate need are seen first.

1. People who have the **most urgent** need — those involved in traumatic events, whose hearts have stopped beating, have abnormal vital signs, or are not breathing well—are seen first.
2. Second to be seen are the **very urgent** cases — those with chest pain, trouble breathing, or with large broken bones.
3. Third are the **urgent cases** — those with asthma attacks, stomach pains or high fever.
4. **Less urgent** are those who need stitches, have smaller broken bones, or a sore ear, eye or throat.
5. **Not urgent** are those who need stitches removed, or who need a prescription renewal.

Individuals experiencing a **mental health crisis** are triaged differently than the physical health examples provided above. Some individuals may come in with related physical symptoms that also need to be treated.

To learn more:  
Client Representative Services  
Box 110  
Royal University Hospital  
Hantleman Building  
103 Hospital Drive  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0W8  
  
Telephone: (306) 655-0250  
Toll-free: 1-866-655-5066  
[client.rep@saskatoonhealthregion.ca](mailto:client.rep@saskatoonhealthregion.ca)

### Why am I waiting?

If you are waiting in the waiting area to see a doctor while others who arrive after you are seen for care before you, it is likely because some patients need care before others. We promise we will see you as quickly as possible.

If you are waiting on a stretcher in the emergency department, it is likely because we are trying to find you the right bed in the right unit in the hospital. You will be moved as soon as possible.

The doctors, nurses and many other health care team members in the emergency department are working as hard as they can to ensure you get the care that you need. Please be patient with them. They have not forgotten you. You are important. You will receive the care you need.

### Can I make an appointment?

Sometimes, patients come into the emergency department with the understanding that they have an appointment through their doctor.

**You cannot make an appointment in the emergency department.**

**Unlike a walk-in clinic, you will not be seen in order of arrival, but based on the urgency of your need.**

*Unlike a walk-in clinic, you will not be seen in order of arrival, but based on the urgency of your need.*

*If you feel your condition or that of your loved one has worsened since you arrived, please inform a triage nurse.*

### *A note from Dr. James Stempien, Medical Head of Emergency*

We know it's difficult to have to wait for care in our emergency departments.

We are all working as hard as we can to make sure you get the care that you need as soon as possible.

The doctors and nurses and many other health care team members who work in Saskatoon emergency departments work extremely hard every shift, carefully looking after our patients. Each and every patient who walks through our doors is important to us, and we want to provide the best care we can to everyone.

We know if you have chosen to come to the emergency department for help, you need it, and we will provide it. But sometimes, we have to provide it to other people in greater need first. We thank you so much for your patience. And please, if while you wait, you feel worse than when you came in, tell us. We need to know.