

FIRST YOU'LL SEE A TRIAGE NURSE...

The Emergency Department is for treatment of patients requiring urgent medical care.

When you first arrive at the Emergency Department, you are seen by a triage nurse, who is trained to rapidly assess you or your loved one's condition. The nurse will ask you questions about what brought you to the Emergency Department and about your general health. He or she will take your pulse, blood pressure, temperature, and breathing rate and take note of any allergies you may have. At this time you will also be asked about any medications you are currently taking.

Based on the severity of illness or injury, the triage nurse decides which patients most urgently need treatment, and in which room care needs to be dispensed. Check with the nurse before eating, drinking or urinating, as some tests require an empty stomach or a full bladder.



NEXT, YOU WILL BE REGISTERED...

The triage nurse gives your information to the registration clerk. If the triage nurse feels you need to be seen immediately by a physician, a family member can register for you. The clerk will ask for your name and address, insurance information and an emergency contact number. If you do not have a health plan, you will not be refused emergency care.

It is important that we have accurate contact information, in case we need to discuss test results that return after you are sent home. The clerk will make up your chart and give you an identification band.

AFTER REGISTRATION...

Upon assessing your medical condition, you may be sent to the appropriate area of the Emergency Department -- or you might be asked to remain in the waiting room. If your condition is not life threatening, you may wait several hours to be seen.

We know it is difficult to wait – especially when you're not feeling well. But, please be assured that we are doing our best to give each patient personal and appropriate care – in the timely manner their condition warrants. If you feel your condition is becoming worse, please let the triage nurse know immediately.

YOUR MEDICAL TREATMENT...

In the treatment area, you will be assigned a primary nurse who will be responsible for your care, until you can be seen by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner. Tests or procedures will be ordered as needed.

If you are admitted...

Your illness or injury may require admission to St. Joseph Hospital. Once your admission is processed, you will be transported to an available bed by a nursing staff member. We ask that you limit visitation of family or friends to one visitor at bedside.

In the event you require treatment not available at our hospital, arrangements will be made to have you transferred to another facility.

When you are discharged...

Once your condition can be stabilized, or based on test results, you may be sent home with instructions. Instructions often include a follow-up appointment with your own doctor. You may also be prescribed medication and given specific symptoms to watch for. If your condition worsens and you are concerned, please return to the emergency department at once.

We hope your experience in St. Joseph Hospital's Emergency Department is positive. We welcome patient feedback.