

# Accessing Urgent Care



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Choose VA

This guide will help you understand how to access urgent care services from a provider in VA's contracted network.

## What is the urgent care benefit?

VA offers eligible Veterans an urgent care benefit for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses at retail and urgent care providers who are part of VA's contracted network. **The urgent care benefit is offered to Veterans in addition to urgent care and same-day services VA provides through its medical facilities.**

## What type of care do urgent care providers provide?

Urgent care providers treat injuries and illnesses that require immediate attention but are not life-threatening, such as the common cold, minor burns and skin infections.

## Am I eligible for urgent care?

To be eligible for the urgent care benefit, you must (1) be enrolled in the VA health care system, AND (2) have received care through VA, from either a VA or a community provider within the last 24 months.

## How do I access urgent care?

Use VA's facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>. Under Facility type, select "Urgent care" and then "In-network community urgent care" from the service type drop-down menu. You can also call your local VA medical facility to find an in-network urgent care provider.

## What do I do when I arrive?

Tell the urgent care provider you would like to use your VA urgent care benefit and confirm that they are part of VA's network. They will confirm your eligibility for the benefit. If there is an issue verifying your eligibility or if you have any other issue at an urgent care location in AK, AS, AZ, CA, CO, GU, HI, ID, MP, MT, NM, NV, OR, TX, UT, WA, and WY, call **866-620-2071**. In DC, PR, VI, and all other states, call **888-901-6609**.

## HOW DO I CONFIRM I AM ELIGIBLE?

To check eligibility, call 800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411) or contact your local medical facility.

## HOW CAN I CONFIRM THAT THE PROVIDER IS IN VA'S NETWORK?

You can determine if a provider is in-network by using the VA's facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>. For telephone assistance finding locations, call 877-881-7618 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST).

## WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

You do **NOT** have an insurance card for this benefit.

Do **NOT** pay a copayment at the time of visit if you are eligible for this benefit. VA will bill you separately for any applicable copayment.

## OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

### Will I have to pay any fees or copayments out-of-pocket?

You may be charged a copayment that is different from other VA medical copayments. Urgent care copayments depend on your assigned priority group and the number of times you visit an urgent care provider in a calendar year.

Priority Group	Copayment Amount (per calendar year)
1 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First three (3) visits: \$0</li><li>• Fourth and &gt; visits: \$30</li></ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>If related to a condition covered by a special authority:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ First three (3) visits: \$0</li><li>▪ Fourth and &gt; visits: \$30</li></ul></li><li>• <b>If not related to a condition covered by a special authority:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ \$30 per visit</li></ul></li></ul>
7 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$30 per visit</li></ul>
1 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$0 copay for a visit consisting of only a flu shot</li></ul>

There is no limit on the number of times you can access urgent care.

Copayments are NOT paid out-of-pocket at the time you receive care. They are billed separately by VA.

### Can I use urgent care as a replacement for my primary care needs?

No. Urgent care is not a replacement for preventive health care or management of chronic or complex health conditions. You should work with your primary care provider for this type of care. **If you go to an urgent care provider and receive non-covered services, you are responsible for the full cost of care.**

### Is urgent care prescription medication covered by VA?

VA will pay for or fill prescriptions resulting from your urgent care visit.

Urgent care prescriptions for medication longer than a 14-day supply must be sent to VA to be filled.

You can fill a 14-day supply of medication written by an urgent care provider at a contracted pharmacy within the VA network, a non-contracted pharmacy that is not part of the VA network, or directly at a VA pharmacy. Opiates are limited to seven days or fewer, consistent with state law that applies to the pharmacy location.

If a non-contracted pharmacy is used, you must pay for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement with your local VA medical facility.

### Do I have to pay a copayment for urgent care prescription medication?

You may be required to pay a copayment for medication. The copayment will be billed separately to you by VA as a part of VA's normal billing process.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### What services are covered?

Find a list of services at:

[https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/Urgent\\_Care](https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/Urgent_Care)

### How do I find an in-network pharmacy or VA medical facility?

Visit VA's facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

### Does VA reimburse beneficiary travel for an urgent care visit?

VA reimburses beneficiary travel for eligible Veterans that must travel to receive community care. Payment is made for the distance to either the nearest VA medical facility or community medical facility that could have provided the care or services.

### What are special authorities?

Special authorities include those related to combat service and exposures, such as Agent Orange, service at Camp Lejeune, ionizing radiation, Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense (SHAD/Project 112), Southwest Asian Conditions as well as military sexual trauma, and presumptions applicable to certain Veterans with psychosis and other mental illnesses.

Visit, <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/PUBLICHEALTH/exposures> for more information.