

WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?

Emergency Department Wait Times Explained

Wait times don't reflect how many people are waiting; they reflect how sick other patients are in the emergency department. Here's how it works...



Level 1—Critical

Examples include:

- Serious car crash
- Heart stopped beating
- Suspected stroke



Level 2—Very Urgent

Examples include:

- Suspected heart attack
- Severe trouble breathing
- Large broken bones



Level 3—Urgent

Examples include:

- Asthma attack
- Stomach pain
- Fainting or seizure
- Temp. 40C+
- Allergic reaction
- Head injury



Level 4—Less Urgent

Examples include:

- Needs stitches
- Broken ankle or arm
- Sore ear, eye or throat



Level 5—Non Urgent

Examples include:

- Removal of stitches
- Renewing a prescription
- Cough or congestion



Mental Health Crisis

A mental health crisis is assessed differently than the previous physical health examples. An emergency department triage nurse makes the initial assessment followed by a physician who determines if the patient needs to be seen by a psychiatrist.



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