
Understanding Types of Healthcare Facilities

There are many kinds of healthcare facilities. You don't always need to go to a hospital or emergency room. You can get care for yourself and your family at many other types of places. \Where you go will depend on what you need.

Where to find healthcare facilities

Look on the web or in your local phone book to find healthcare facilities near you. Search for:

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Health services
- Physician offices
- Rehabilitation services or centers

Your primary healthcare provider

Your primary healthcare provider is the place to start. A provider is often part of a group of healthcare providers. This is called a medical practice or group. You can get all the healthcare services you need by starting with your primary provider. They can diagnose and give treatment. They can help organize other healthcare services you may need.

Your primary healthcare provider diagnoses and treats both acute and chronic illnesses. They can help you stay healthy and protect you from illness. You can get counseling through them. You can talk with them to learn more about your condition. Your provider's medical practice may include different types of health professionals.

Most of your health can be managed by your primary healthcare provider. It's best if they are in your own town. That's so they can help you find other health services you may need. They can tell you where to go for certain types of care.

Urgent care center

Urgent care centers give medical care right away if you can't see your own healthcare provider. These places can treat acute and chronic illness and injury. They don't replace your healthcare provider. An urgent care center can help if your regular provider is on vacation or if you need vaccines. You can go to one if you can't get an appointment with your normal provider as soon as you need to. This is the place to go when you need help outside of regular office hours. Often the wait time is less than in an emergency room (ER).

Emergency room (ER)

The ER is for only serious illness and injury. In the ER, you will be examined and treated. This may be for medical, surgical, or psychiatric care. You can get emergency care in a

hospital. Or you can get it in a separate building. Emergency care may be done in an urgent care clinic. It may be done in an emergency medical response vehicle. It may be done at a disaster site. It depends upon the extent of your illness or injury.

In many cases, you can be treated as an outpatient. This means you don't have to be admitted to a hospital. Outpatient services include:

- ER treatment
- Monitoring
- Outpatient surgery
- Lab tests
- X-rays

Hospital

Hospitals play an important role in the healthcare system. Hospitals have a staff of healthcare providers and other health professionals. They have rooms where patients stay. They give care around the clock. This care can be medical, surgical, mental health, and nursing. Hospitals have a range of care for acute and chronic problems. They care for you while you recover from surgery. They care for you if you're having treatment for an injury.

Inpatient rehabilitation facility (IRF)

An IRF gives intense rehabilitation treatment. It can be done in an inpatient rehab hospital. Or it can be done as part of a rehab hospital. A group of healthcare providers from different specialties coordinates your care. Your healthcare team may have:

- Rehab healthcare provider
- Registered nurse
- Social worker
- Care manager
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Speech-language pathologist
- Expert on prosthetics or orthotics
- Experts in palliative or symptom-focused care

People with complex health problems are often treated at an IRF. They may have neurological, musculoskeletal, and orthopedic problems.

An IRF has skilled nursing care 24 hours a day. This care is supervised by a healthcare provider. You see a healthcare provider at least 3 times a week. Rehab therapy often happens 5 days a week for at least 3 hours a day. Therapy sessions may vary. They depend on your health problem and your healthcare provider's practices.

Comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facility (CORF)

Outpatient rehab means don't stay overnight. You travel to a clinic, hospital, or rehab facility for treatment. You can go home the same day. A group of healthcare providers from different specialties coordinates your care. Your healthcare team may have:

- Primary healthcare provider
- Licensed or registered nurse
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Respiratory therapist
- Social worker
- Speech-language pathologist

A CORF gives skilled outpatient rehab therapy. The length of your session at a CORF may vary. It depends on your health problem and your healthcare provider's practices. It can last from 30 minutes to more than 1 hour. It's used for conditions like back and neck problems and knee injuries in people who are ill or disabled. It's for nerve and brain problems like stroke. You can get care for some skin disorders like wounds, burns, or diabetic foot sores. As your health gets better, some of these services can be given by visiting nurses or other healthcare providers in your home.

Skilled nursing facility

A skilled nursing facility could be part of a nursing home or a hospital. It offers long- and short-term care. This facility will offer nursing care 24 hours a day. You can get:

- Physical or occupational therapy
- Speech language services
- Medical social services
- Medicine treatment

These services are all guided by a healthcare provider. This type of care is often used if you are very sick. It may even include palliative or hospice care. You may have this care if you are recovering from a serious accident or surgery. You can get the treatment you need and get help with bathing, eating, and walking.