

Tips for Parents by Parents

Navigating the Pediatric Emergency Service

What is the process in the Pediatric Emergency Service?

The steps you go through in the Emergency Service will depend on the severity of your child's emergency.

In the waiting room you will fill out forms and mark the time you arrive on a clock; this is called "clocking in." If you do not see a person sitting there, don't worry -- the area is watched at all times by nurses on monitors.

A triage nurse will assess your child's condition. Your child will be sent back into the waiting room or taken right into the emergency service.

If your child goes back to the waiting room the Doctor will either come to get your child or he or she will be called in on the speakers.

You and your child will be taken back into the emergency service to be treated.

Remember, all of these steps depend on how sick your child is. If another patient arrives with a more severe emergency, this may increase your waiting time.

Why may a child, who arrived after my child, be seen first?

The order that patients are seen depends on how severe the case is. There is also a doctor called a "Fast Track Attending." This is a Doctor who treats patients whose emergencies can be treated quickly. This may be a reason why a patient who arrives after you is seen first.

Can my child have comfort items from home in the Emergency Service?

Yes. You can bring a small number of items that will keep your child comfortable during his or her visit. For example: a stuffed animal, a special blankets, or small toys.

What is a Child Life Specialist and how can they help?

A Child Life specialist is a professional who is trained in child development and is available to help families and patients during their stay in the hospital. The Child Life Specialist can help by answering questions and discussing procedures with parents or children, teaching your child stress reduction and pain management techniques, and help distract your child while in the hospital. They can even show the instruments that the doctor may use to help your child understand what will happen during their visit.

Does the hospital provide any comfort items/food for the patients?

Yes, the Emergency Service has small snacks, drinks and activity kits available. There are also some videos, magazines and DVDs available. You can ask a Nurse or a Child Life Specialist to help find these items.

Who are the doctors and what times are their shifts in the Pediatric Emergency Service?

The Emergency Service is staffed with 2 Attending Physicians, 2 Residents, and 4 Nurses. Their shifts may vary; if your child is in the Emergency Service over a shift change, the doctors will always make sure that the new doctor is up to date on all medical information about your child before he or she leaves. An attempt will be made to introduce the new doctor to you but because of the nature of the Emergency Service this may not always be possible.

How many people are allowed to accompany a child into the Emergency Service?

There is no limit to the number of people that can be with a child in the Emergency Service. We ask that you please keep in mind that in order to complete procedures and give every patient the best care, visitors may be asked to wait in the waiting room.

Are there translators available?

Yes, there are translators available. If you need this service you can ask a nurse or a Child Life Specialist.

Why are there beds in the hallway?

In order to treat the needs of all of the patients that visit the Emergency Service there are beds set up in the hallways. During very busy times, these may be used. The care a child receives in the hallway is exactly the same as in a room.

Are there specialists in the Emergency Service?

If the doctors in the Emergency Service feel that the patient needs a specialist, one may be contacted.

When do I contact my insurance company?

Once your child is being cared for in the Emergency Service, a Registrar will obtain your insurance information during your visit