**Site-of-Care**

**Patient Education**

**Determining What Level of Care is Best for Your Needs**

When you are sick or hurt and can’t get into your primary care office, it can be hard to know what to do – wait it out, go to the emergency department or visit an urgent care clinic.

Your primary care provider is your first line of defense for medical care. Your provider and care team have records of your health history, medications and current needs, and often are best suited to handle non-urgent medical care. However, if your primary care team is unavailable or it is after hours, knowing your other options is important.

If you have a common health problem that needs to be treated soon and cannot wait until your primary care clinic has an appointment available, you should consider going to your closest urgent care facility.

Urgent Care is a good solution for minor illnesses and injuries, such as cough, colds, sore throats, ear aches, minor cuts, bruises and muscle sprains. Although every situation is different, you typically will experience shorter wait times and lower costs at an urgent care facility versus the emergency department.

When facing serious, **life-threatening** or disabling conditions, like chest pressure, or severe burns you should call 9-1-1 immediately.

Thinking ahead and understanding your options before you need them is your best option. Talk to your primary care provider about your personal conditions and when the right time to seek urgent or emergency care should be.

Still trying to decide where to go? The Nebraska Health Network has created a quick reference guide that can help you narrow down where and when the right time to seek urgent care should be based on what you are experiencing. Go to nebraskahealthnetwork.com/patient-resources to download the reference guide today.

For a complete list of urgent care and emergency department locations, visit nebraskamed.com or bestcare.org.