Getting quick medical care shouldn’t be a headache

Life is unpredictable. One minute, you have a sniffle, and the next it’s a painful sinus infection, but your doctor’s office is closed. What now? If it’s not a true emergency, the hours you’ll spend waiting in the ER* will make an uncomfortable situation even worse.

Now you can eliminate the wait. When a sudden illness or injury requires prompt medical attention, your choices for care include participating urgent care centers and retail health clinics.

Just walk in, present your Independence Blue Cross member ID card, and get treated by a trusted health care professional. You don’t need an appointment or referral.

What is an urgent care center?

A health care facility staffed by board-certified doctors that can provide medically necessary treatment for a sudden illness or injury that requires prompt medical attention but is not life-threatening.

*The average emergency room wait time is four hours. This is a 31-minute increase in the nationwide average since 2002. Source: 2010 Emergency Department Pulse Report: Patient Perspectives on American Health Care, Press Ganey.
What is a retail health clinic?
A health care facility staffed by certified nurse practitioners that can treat minor, uncomplicated illnesses and injuries.

When I need medical treatment right away, where should I go for care?
Urgent care centers and retail health clinics offer a convenient, safe, and affordable treatment alternative when you can’t get an appointment with your own doctor but your condition is not serious enough for a trip to the emergency room.

What type of services do urgent care centers and retail health clinics offer?
These providers can treat many of the same non-emergency illnesses and injuries that your doctor can. A retail health clinic employs certified nurse practitioners who can treat minor, uncomplicated illnesses and injuries, such as fevers and colds, rashes, bumps, and scrapes. Some retail health clinics may also offer flu shots and vaccinations. An urgent care center employs board-certified doctors for the treatment of cuts, sprains, broken bones, sinus infections, and other types of urgent medical conditions.

Does my health plan cover visits?
Yes. Simply present your member ID when you arrive. With this new benefit, you’ll pay less to visit a participating urgent care center or retail health clinic than you’ll pay for an emergency room visit.

Remember:
If you have a life-threatening medical situation, such as uncontrolled bleeding or chest pain with shortness of breath, you should always seek treatment at the nearest hospital emergency room.

Questions about urgent care? We can help. Call 1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583) or visit ibx.com/findcarenow