

Urgent Care Clinics and Free-Standing Emergency Rooms



According to the Colorado Hospital Association, hospitals who own free-standing emergency rooms are likely to charge the same amount for care at their free-standing emergency room as their hospital-based emergency room. In comparison to receiving care at urgent care clinics, patients could pay substantially more for treatment at emergency facilities. For example, receiving care for bronchitis can cost nearly ten times more at an emergency facility. For all non-emergent conditions evaluated, the bill at an emergency facility is at least \$400 more than at urgent care clinics. (Center for Improving Value in Health Care, July 2016).

Know Where to Go

Aurora is fortunate to have many different kinds of healthcare facilities to choose from when you have a healthcare need. Understanding the differences can have an impact on your time, your wallet, and your health.

Primary Care Clinic

If you have a provider or clinic that you regularly visit, this is the best place to start when you have a healthcare need. They know you, and they have your medical records.

Unless it is an emergency, call them first. They may offer walk-in appointments or be able to help you decide where to go.

These are also called medical homes.

In a life- or limb-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1.

Urgent Care Clinic

Urgent care clinics usually offer walk-in services and can treat most non-serious medical conditions like colds, allergies, cuts, and sore throats.

These clinics are often open evenings and weekends, and usually have shorter wait times than emergency rooms.

The level of services and hours can vary.

These clinics accept many insurance plans.

The costs (out-of-pocket, cash, and/or insurance co-pays) will usually be lower than in an emergency room.

These are also called walk-in centers, retail clinics, or convenient care.

Free-Standing Emergency Room

These facilities offer emergency room services in a facility separate from a hospital.

They are required to have basically the same levels of staffing and service as a hospital-based emergency room.

They treat the most serious needs first, so you might have a long wait if you don't have an emergency.

For true emergencies, they accept all types of insurance, but for non-emergencies, you may end up paying significantly more for care.

Costs are higher because of the higher-level of staffing and services required. Your health insurance co-pays may be much higher at these facilities.

Hospital Emergency Room

If you are having a life- or limb-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 or get to the nearest emergency room.

An emergency room is not the best place to go for non-emergency health needs. You may face long waiting times and much higher costs.

Colorado Crisis Services

If you have a behavioral or mental health emergency, Aurora offers a 24 hours per day Crisis Center at 2206 Victor Street or call 1-844-493-8255.

Know Before You Go

Before you have an emergency, or an after-hours health issue arises...



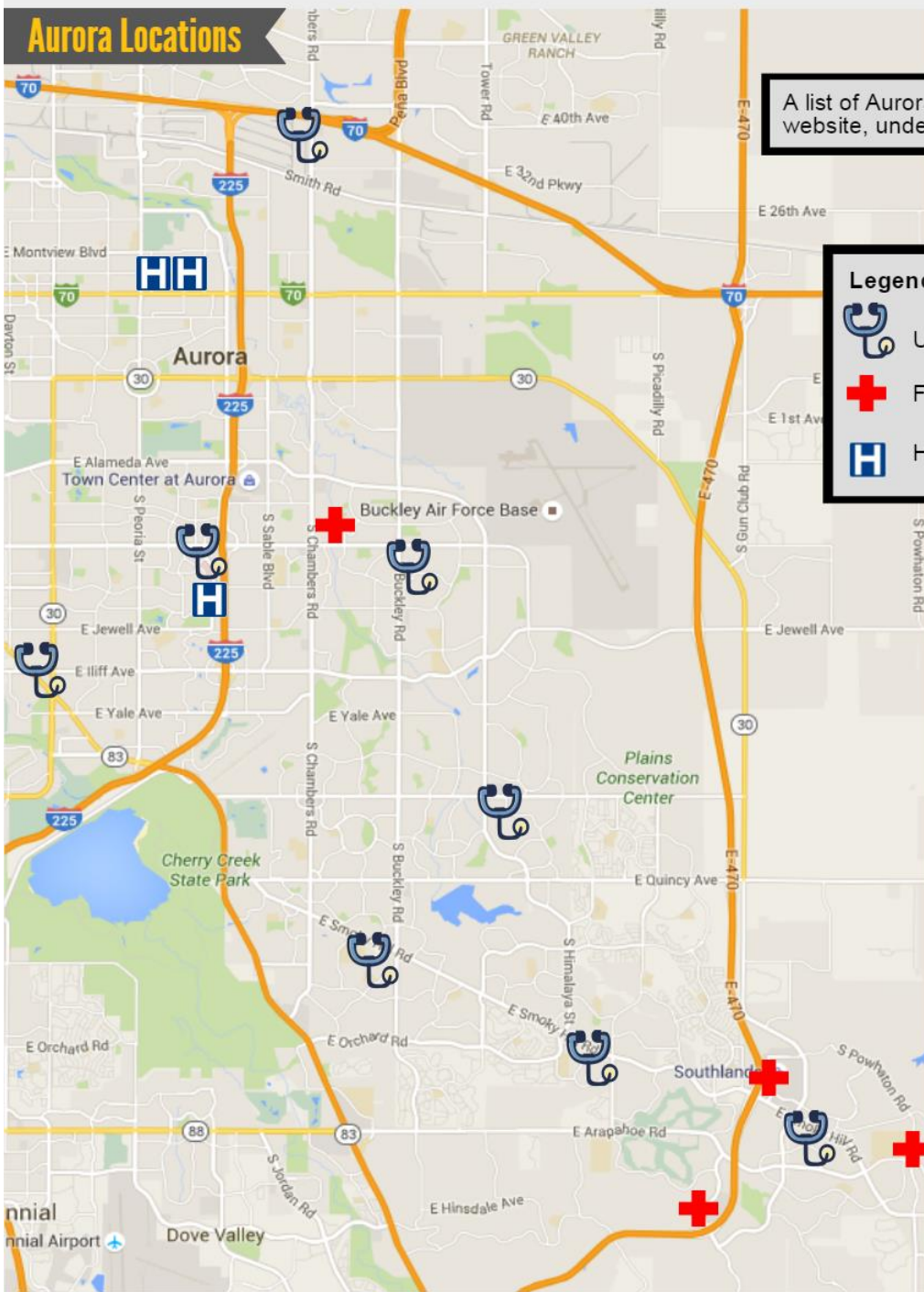
Contact your health insurance company to find out which facilities are covered and in your network, and what your co-pay would be.



Find or visit the health facilities in your neighborhood to find out more about their hours, the services they offer, whether they accept your insurance, and their payment policies.




**If you are insured through Medicaid, while your own co-pay amounts aren't much different, if you go to the emergency room for non-emergencies, the cost to our health system, that everyone must pay, is much higher than using a primary care or urgent care clinic for that non-emergency. For help determining what level of care you need, you can call the Medicaid Nurse Hotline anytime at 800-283-3221.*

Aurora Locations








A list of Aurora's facilities can be found on AHA's website, under "Data Sources & Reports"

Legend

-  Urgent Care Clinic
-  Free-standing Emergency Room
-  Hospital-Based Emergency Room

Save time and money -
 While rates and wait times can vary, in general:

-    Less expensive and a short wait time.
-    More expensive and a short wait time.
-    More expensive, and if not a true emergency, probably a much longer wait time.

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Aurora Health Access (AHA) is a community alliance of healthcare organizations, public agencies, providers, civic and business leaders, and residents committed to creating a healthcare system in Aurora that meets the needs of all its residents. AHA offers an inclusive convening table where health and community leaders can come together to discuss and develop solutions to health access issues in their community. AHA has been working since 2010 toward three goals: Increasing Access! Expanding Coverage! Building Collaboration! To learn more and get involved, please visit our website.