CARE GUIDE

St. Cloud VA HCS

January 2022

Health care needs and services take many forms. Making sense of the type of care needed, and when and where to get needed care can be confusing.

Most care needs are grouped into three priority levels: <u>routine</u>, <u>urgent</u> or <u>emergency</u> needs.

Understanding the differences in these priority levels can help you get the right care in the right place and at the right time.

VA | **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

Routine Care

Routine Care includes annual physicals, health screenings, regular diabetes and blood pressure checks, medication renewals, and follow-up care after urgent care, an ER visit or hospital discharge, or after surgery or seeing a specialist or completing a consult. Scheduling intervals can vary and are usually determined in coordination with your provider.

Routine care needs are provided in VA health care clinics, VA community-based outpatient clinics, and community care referrals for specialized care needs. Many needs can be met using virtual care methods such as phone calls, video visits or text chats.

For most routine health care needs, including follow-up visits and regular screenings contact Primary Care to make an appointment at 320-252-1670, ext. 6339.

Most routine mental health needs are provided in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic at ext. 6322. However, the Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) team integrates mental health care with routine medical care. You can get services for depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance use without a separate appointment. Contact PCMHI at ext. 7531.

Routine specialized care is generally received following a referral from a primary care provider. However, Veterans may schedule in these specialty clinics without a referral:

- Audiology, ext. 4370
- Optometry, ext. 5432
- Nutrition, ext. 6376
- Respiratory Therapy: ext. 6606 (established patients)

All other clinics require a referral from your primary care provider.

Urgent Care

Urgent Care is when you need immediate care for minor injuries and illnesses that are not life-threatening, but which need to be addressed within 24-48 hours.

Urgent care is for health problems or symptoms like these:

- A sore throat or persistent cough
- Strains, sprains, or minor broken bones
- Deep cuts that are no longer bleeding a lot
- Allergies
- Mild burns
- Mild nausea or vomiting
- Urinary tract infection symptoms (like needing to urinate often or urgently, urine that looks cloudy or smells bad, pain when you urinate, or pain in your side, abdomen, or pelvic area)
- Urgent mental health or substance use concerns

Urgent care needs are provided in the St. Cloud VA Urgent Care Center in Bldg. 1 (available for walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 7 days a week including holidays) or at in-network community urgent care or retail clinics for eligible Veterans.

Find community urgent care or retail clinic locations at **https://www.va.gov/find-locations/** or call 844-698-2411. See the Community Urgent Care Checklist on pages 6-8 for helpful information on using the VA MISSION Act Urgent Care benefit at VA's in-network community locations.

Thoughts of suicide or harming yourself or others?
*Call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 and press 1, text to 838255, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net, call **911**, or go to the closest community hospital emergency department.*

Emergency Care

Emergency Care is needed any time you think your life or health is in danger. Go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 right away.

The St. Cloud VA does not have an emergency department, acute medical care services, or after-hours outpatient services at any of our locations. <u>If you need emergency care, you don't need a VA referral or approval to go to a non-VA emergency room in your community</u>!

Get emergency help right away for any symptoms like these:
* Head injury or trouble breathing
* Falling without a known cause
* Cuts that won't stop bleeding
* Severe burns, or wounds that won't close
* Stroke symptoms (like slurred speech, sudden numbness or weakness in a part of your body, loss of balance or vision, or a drooping face)
* Chest pain or discomfort (like pressure, squeezing, or a feeling of fullness in your chest)
* Severe allergic reaction symptoms (like swelling lips or trouble swallowing or breathing)
* Vaginal bleeding or abdominal pain during pregnancy
* Severe dizziness or losing consciousness (passing out)
* A headache that keeps getting worse or won't go away
* Vomiting or nausea that won't stop
* A high fever with a headache or stiff neck
* Seizures
* Dilated pupils, trouble waking up or staying awake, or clear fluids draining from the nose or ears after a head injury
* Thoughts of suicide or harming yourself or others

These symptoms aren't all the signs of an emergency. If you feel your life or health is in danger, get help right away.

Emergency Care Quick-Facts

Reporting Emergency Episodes of Care
- To facilitate treatment and claims payment, emergency care episodes must be reported to VA within 72 hours. Veterans and family members should remind community hospitals and providers to report emergency visits to VA using the VA Community Care portal at **https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov/#/request** or by phone at **1-844-72HRVHA** or **(844-724-7842).** Reporting emergency admissions helps your VA team arrange additional care or transfer to a VA facility.
- VA payment authority for emergency care is normally limited to the point-of-stabilization only. VA authorization is required to engage in any additional treatment or follow-on care at community hospitals, rehabilitation centers or other sites of care.

Emergency Care Claims
- <u>In most cases, providers will submit a claim directly to VA or to the Third-party Administrator-Optum Health Service, and the Veteran will not have to take further action.</u>
- For emergency care claims assistance, Veterans can call 877- 881-7618.

Billing and payment
- VA has specific legal authorities to purchase emergency care. VA can pay for care an eligible Veteran received from a community emergency department in certain circumstances and under specific conditions.
- Once a claim for emergency treatment is received by VA, the claim will be administratively reviewed to determine eligibility. If the Veteran meets administrative eligibility criteria, the treatment documentation will then be reviewed by VA clinical staff to determine if the treatment received meets the clinical criteria necessary for VA to pay for the care.

Community Urgent Care Checklist

For Veterans:

1. Check eligibility. You are eligible if enrolled in the VA healthcare system and received care through VA or a VA authorized community provider within the past 24 months. Call 844-698-2411 and select option 1 then option 3 to verify your eligibility for urgent care services, or for general questions related to the urgent care benefit.

2. Find a provider. Use the VA Facility Locator to find in-network urgent care and pharmacy locations **https://www.va.gov/find-locations/**

- Select the "urgent care" VA facility type and the "community urgent care providers (in VA's network) from the service type drop down box.

- Network changes do occur, so check for in-network providers before each visit, and call to confirm services and hours prior to visiting.

3. Confirm the provider is an in-network VA urgent care provider.

- Bring a valid, government-issued photo ID, and ask and verify the urgent care provider/pharmacy is in VA network.

- Call 888-901-6609 for assistance if you need have difficulty receiving urgent care or filling your urgent care prescription.

Community Urgent Care Checklist, cont.

4. Get Urgent Care

- After receiving care, if you need prescription medication, make sure the provider activates your pharmacy benefits under the VA urgent care benefit.

- VA will pay for a 14-day supply (no refills) of prescription medication for the condition for which you are provided care (Opiates limited to seven days or less, consistent with the pharmacy locations state law).

- Prescriptions can be filled at a VA pharmacy, at an authorized in-network pharmacy or pay out-of-pocket at a out-of-network pharmacy and file for reimbursement.

- To find an in-network pharmacy, visit **https://www.va.gov/find-locations/**

- Veterans filing claims for prescription medication reimbursement should include a copy of the prescription (pharmacy label) and receipt and mail to: *OCC Claims Processing – St. Cloud, PO Box 1004, Fort Harrison, MT 59636 -1004*

5. Copayments

- DO NOT pay a copayment at the time of urgent care visit or for medications. Copays are billed separately by VA.

- Copays depend on your assigned priority group and how many times you use urgent care in a calendar year.

Community Urgent Care Checklist, cont.

6. For Providers

- Call 888-901-6609 to confirm Veteran's eligibility for urgent care services.
- Ensure any 14-day Rx is on VA Urgent/Emergent Formulary at **https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp** if prescribing an urgent care prescription.
- Make sure you have activated Veteran's pharmacy benefit by calling to check their eligibility.
- File urgent care claim <u>within 180 days</u> with Optum.
- After visit, submit medical documentation to the Veteran's home VA medical center (VAMC) within 30 days. Find a VAMC at **https://www.va.gov/find-locations/**

7. For Pharmacist

- Maximum day supply for a Veteran's initial fill is 14 days (7 days or fewer for opioids). No refills. Medication must be on VA Urgent/Emergent Formulary **https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp**
- DO NOT charge Veteran a copayment for dispensed medications. Instruct Veteran to fill prescription(s) in the same state as their urgent care visit.
- Enter VA pharmacy claims using the following information:
  - Step 1: Enter BIN: 004336
  - Step 2: Enter PCN: ADV
  - Step 3: Enter Rx Group: RX4136
  - Step 4: Enter Veteran 9-digit SSN or 10-digit Veterans ID number
  - Step 5: Enter Veteran's date of birth (YYMMDD format)
- If a non-contracted pharmacy is used, Veteran must pay out-of-pocket for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement
- If Veteran is not eligible for pharmacy benefits, but has an urgent care prescription, please advise him/her to call Optum at 888-901-6609 (7 a.m.—12 a.m. ET / 7 days a week).