WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

We know it’s not easy to think quickly and clearly in a medical emergency. That’s why we’ve created this checklist for you to keep handy — just in case.

If you suspect a medical problem is critical or life-threatening, the most important thing to remember is call 911. Don’t wait, don’t hesitate, just call.

If the situation is not critical, and you can step away for a moment, try to gather the following items for the injured or sick person to bring to the Emergency Department or give to emergency personnel.

- Photo ID
- Medical insurance card
- A list of allergies, recent illnesses and chronic health conditions
- Physician contact information
- A list of medications and/or supplements they regularly take. It’s a good idea to have such a list compiled and handy for every family member.
- Emergency contact list
- Cell phone and battery charger

If you are sick or injured yourself, use common sense! You may be in no shape to run around the house looking for the above items. If possible, have someone else gather your things for you.

DO NOT DRIVE YOURSELF TO THE HOSPITAL. Get a ride or call an ambulance.

If you or your loved one is hospitalized, it’s helpful to bring the following items:

- Any medical equipment the patient uses every day, such as glasses or contact lenses and lens-cleaning solution, a hearing aid, a cane, wheelchair or walker, or a C-Pap machine
- Overnight bag with pajamas, underwear and socks, and a change of clothing
- A small amount of money or a credit card (to purchase toiletries or arrange transportation, for example)
- Legal paperwork (Power of Attorney, Advance Directive, or other healthcare proxy)

DO NOT bring jewelry or other valuables. Emergency Department patients are frequently moved for testing, imaging and other procedures and it’s easy to lose things under stressful circumstances.