



Gesundheitsdepartement des Kantons Basel-Stadt

Medizinische Dienste

Making smart decisions in an emergency

TIPS FOR CHOOSING THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEDICAL CARE



HEALTH COMPASS

There is a range of different healthcare access points in the canton of Basel-Stadt. Going straight to the Accident & Emergency Department is not always the best solution. "Choosing the choice" the most appropriate choice of medical care helps to reduce waiting times and minimise healthcare costs. But what is the most appropriate choice?

Let's take a look at our examples of Fred, who is 58 years old, and Luisa, who is 32 years old:

1

Fred wakes up in the morning and is experiencing strong heart palpitations. Luisa has had a nagging cough for several days and is now also getting a fever. In both cases, it would be prudent to arrange an appointment with the family doctor as a first step.



If you or your family are experiencing symptoms of illness, firstly dial the number of your family doctor or your paediatrician.

Your family doctor is your first point of contact for health-related matters and will treat you, or refer you to a specialist if necessary.

FAMILY DOCTOR

To find the address of family doctors, visit the website of the Vereinigung der Hausärztinnen und Hausärzte beider Basel, www.vhbb.ch, and the website of the Medizinische Gesellschaft Basel [MedGes], www.medges.ch. These sites will also give details of available patient capacities and the languages in which medical consultations are offered.

PAEDIATRICIAN

The addresses of paediatricians can be found on the website of the Gesellschaft für Kinder- und Jugendmedizin Regio Basel, www.kindermedizin-regiobasel.ch



Please don't forget: You can also find details of dentists on the website of the Schweizerische Zahnärzte-Gesellschaft, SSO, www.basler-zahnaerzte.ch/Zahnartzsuche_BS

2

If the symptoms experienced by Fred and Luisa (cough with fever or strong heart palpitations) occur outside the normal opening hours of their family doctor, for example in the evening or over the weekend, or if they don't have a regular family doctor, then a call to the Medical Emergency Helpline [MNZ] is advisable.



If you are unable to reach your doctor, then either contact the listed alternative medical centre or call the Medical Emergency Helpline [MNZ, telephone 061 261 15 15].

The Medical Emergency Helpline will put you in touch with doctors and paediatricians around the clock. The official 24-hour Emergency Medical Helpline [MNZ] will connect you with the rostered medical emergency service or transfer the caller directly to an appropriate Accident & Emergency Department.

3

If Fred wants to improve his cardiac health, for example by getting advice on how to stop smoking, and Luisa has a cough, but no fever, then a pharmacy will also be able to help them.

If you experience health problems, find your nearest pharmacy.

PHARMACY

If you have minor ailments or general health questions, you can also ask for advice at a pharmacy. You can also obtain over-the-counter medications that don't require a doctor's prescription at a pharmacy.

A list of pharmacies in the canton of Basel-Stadt can be found at: www.gesundheit.bs.ch/apotheken-liste



4

If Fred experiences persistent, severe chest pains and Luisa also has difficulty breathing in addition to her cough and fever, then an emergency call [144] for an ambulance or a visit to an Accident & Emergency Department is appropriate.



EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Ambulance **144**

Police **117**

Fire Brigade **118**

Poisons Information Centre **145**

Swiss Air Force [Rega] **1414**

In acute, life-threatening situations, it is best to call an ambulance using the emergency number 144.

EXAMPLES OF EMERGENCIES ARE:

- Severe chest pain, heart problems
- Sudden bleeding that is unstoppable
- Exposed bone fractures
- Severe pneumonia
- Severe allergic reactions to foods, medicines and insect bites

HOSPITAL

You should only go to the Accident & Emergency Department of a hospital in acute situations (as described above) or if you have been referred to the hospital by a doctor.

For medical emergencies involving children or youths under the age of 18 years, the Universitäts-Kinderspital beider Basel (UKBB) can be visited.

UNIVERSITÄTSSPITAL BASEL

Spitalstrasse 21 / Petersgraben 4, 4031 Basel
Tel. **061 265 25 25**

UNIVERSITÄTS-KINDERSPITAL BEIDER BASEL

Spitalstrasse 33, 4056 Basel
Tel. **061 704 12 12**

ST. CLARASPITAL

Kleinriehenstrasse 30, 4058 Basel
Tel. **061 685 85 85**

Tips from the cantonal physician



If you notice on Friday that you are feeling unwell, it is advisable to arrange an appointment with your family doctor for the same day. In the best-case scenario, this will eliminate the need for a trip to the Accident & Emergency Department over the weekend.

Elderly people in particular should not wait long and seek medical help as soon as possible if they feel generally weak or have symptoms affecting only one side of their body.

It will generally be very helpful if you always have the following documents to hand:

- Identity card (ID), passport or driving licence
- Health insurance card
- Any other important medical documents like a blood donor's card, allergy passport or diabetic ID card

Prepared documentation and smartphone apps may also prove helpful:

Echo112 is a free app that sends your location to local emergency services around the world. In an emergency, open the app and it will automatically dial the correct emergency service number [echo112.com].

Doccall is a free app that connects you with local outpatient medical emergency services throughout Switzerland. It offers rapid assistance in the event of outpatient medical emergencies if your family doctor is not available [www.doccall.ch].

A **living will** gives you the opportunity to state what actions should be taken regarding your health, should you be unable to express yourself because of an illness or accident [www.basler-patientenverfuegung.ch].

If you have any questions or queries, the medical services of the Gesundheitsdepartement Basel-Stadt will be pleased to assist you on 061 267 90 00 or md@bs.ch.

Where to go in an emergency?



FAMILY DOCTOR

If you or your family are experiencing symptoms of illness, firstly dial the number of your family doctor or your paediatrician.

PHARMACY

If you are experiencing general health problems, find your nearest pharmacy for advice.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY HELPLINE (MNZ)

If you do not have a regular family doctor, or you cannot reach your doctor, call the Medical Emergency Helpline [MNZ], **tel. 061 261 15 15**.

ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

Only go to the Accident & Emergency Department of a hospital in emergencies or if you have been referred to a hospital by a doctor.

In acute, life-threatening situations, call an ambulance using the **emergency number 144**.

Legal information

Gesundheitsdepartement des Kantons
Basel-Stadt, Medizinische Dienste

Malzgasse 30, 4001 Basel

T 061 267 90 00

E-Mail: md@bs.ch

Further information can be found at:
gesundheit.bs.ch