

Welcome to the BC Children's Hospital Emergency Department

We provide emergency care for babies, children and youth up to 16 years old.

We understand that a visit to the Emergency Department can be a stressful time for you, your child and family. We have a team of people who are ready to care for your child and help make your visit a positive one.

At BC Children's Hospital, we believe that everyone should be treated with respect. Harassment or abuse will not be tolerated. We are working as fast as we can. We thank you for your patience and for being kind and respectful to staff.

What happens when you arrive?

First, a triage nurse will take your child's health card and find out the reason for your visit. Next, an admitting clerk will ask for some information to start a record of your child's hospital visit.

Based on the nurse's assessment, children are treated based on medical need, not in the order they arrive. This is different than the typical "line-up" some families might expect. The most ill patients are seen as a priority.

Safety first

Many children who visit the hospital have severe allergies. Please help us keep our hospital peanut-free and latex-free.

To prevent falls, children must be supervised closely. Please stay with your child at all times.

Please tell us if:

- Your child has been in contact with chicken pox, measles, COVID-19, mumps or MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) or TB (tuberculosis)
- Your child wants to eat or drink, the nurse can tell you if it's safe and allowed
- Your child's condition gets worse, so that a nurse can reassess your child
- Your child needs anything for pain or comfort
- You decide to leave before seeing a doctor

How long will you have to wait?

We will always take care of the sickest children first, no matter when they arrive. Because things can change quickly in the Emergency Department, we can't tell you exactly how long you'll have to wait.

You may be asked to wait in a waiting room or your own room. When your child is assigned to a room, a nurse will do an assessment and ask your child to change into a hospital gown or pajamas.

Although there are several nurses, there may be only one or two doctors or nurse practitioner in the department. The provider may need to spend a long time with one very ill child which may create longer waits for others.

You can view the wait times at our hospital, and some area emergency departments, in real time online at [ED Wait Times](#). You can also view the wait times for other sites that see children and youth.

Additional waiting space

Due to higher numbers of patients, please be considerate of waiting room space when possible. We ask that just one parent or guardian accompany a patient.

We understand that families want to be together when someone is feeling unwell. We have arranged a nearby additional waiting space in Medical Imaging (Room T1-200A and T1-200B in the Teck Acute Care Centre) for extra visitors. Thank you for using this space as it ensures there's room in our main waiting areas for patients.

Who you may meet

BC Children's Hospital is a teaching hospital, as well as a research centre. There are many different health care professionals working and training here. Some or all of them may examine your child.

- **[Indigenous patient navigators](#)** provide cultural support and comfort to Indigenous patients and families. They can attend appointments with a patient, help access traditional medicines and connect your family with an Elder.
- The **emergency attending physician** is a specialist in child injury and illness who takes overall charge of your child's health care plan.
- **Consultants** are expert doctors on a particular body system. They give advice to the health care team.
- **Residents and fellows** are fully qualified doctors who are now training as specialists. They provide most of the day-to-day medical care and work under the guidance of the specialists.
- **Nurse practitioners** are specially trained to diagnose and treat minor illnesses and injuries.
- **Nurses** are specially trained in child and emergency health.
- **Respiratory therapists** look after the respiratory system, or the lungs. If your child needs a breathing machine, respiratory therapists ensure it is working in the best way possible.
- **Medical students and nursing students** are there as an important part of medical training. All of their work is fully supervised.
- **Unit clerks** organize the flow of patients in the Emergency Department. They can help direct you.
- **Porters** help to transport your child safely to different areas of the hospital for tests and procedures.
- **[Child life specialists](#)** can support your child through a procedure and help reduce your child's fear through play or distraction. If your child is nervous about a test or procedure, ask if a child life specialist is available.
- **Social workers** can provide support services and counselling to patients and families, and are part of your child's health care team at the hospital.
- **Waiting room ambassadors** are volunteers dedicated to the waiting room who advise families about campus services and engage children in activities, like coloring.

Questions

Each patient room has a whiteboard and markers. You can use these to write down any questions you may have.

Food and gift shop services

Shaughnessy Cafeteria

- Located on the 1st floor of the Shaughnessy building, near Entrance 79.
- Hours are Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday to Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and statutory holidays from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Starbucks

- Located in the lobby of the Ambulatory Care building, near Entrance 42.
- Hours are Monday to Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Saturday to Sunday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and statutory holidays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Second Cup

- Located in the lobby of the main BC Children's Hospital building, near Entrance 11.
- Hours are Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday to Sunday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and statutory holidays from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Tim Hortons – On the Go Bistro

- Located in the lobby of the BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre building, near Entrance 93.
- Hours are Monday to Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Vending machines

- Located in the main floor lobby at Entrance 53, beside Second Cup, in the Shaughnessy Cafeteria, on the 2nd floor of Ambulatory Care building directly above Starbucks, and near inpatient units in the BC Children's Hospital building.

The Auxiliary to BC Children's Hospital Gift Shop

- Located in the lobby of main lobby, near Entrance 11.
- Hours are Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- It carries a wide variety of items including books, toys, plush toys and some personal care items. All proceeds are donated to the hospital for patient programs and to enhance patient care.

Statutory holidays may affect these hours. Please watch for signs posted at service locations.