

# What is an emergency?



An emergency is an unforeseen situation that requires special attention, and must be resolved as soon as possible. It usually occurs without notice, and can pose a danger if it is not taken care of promptly and with the appropriate measures.

## **In terms of health, there are two types of situations to be aware of:**

**Medical Emergency:** Is the need for medical assistance for a condition that occurs without warning, in which life or health are threatened, and that can cause death without assistance. Some examples are: bleeding that does not stop and breathing problems.

**Medical Urgency:** Is the need for medical assistance for a condition that does not threaten the person's immediate health, and contrary to the emergency, is not life-threatening. Examples of medical urgencies are minor infections such as throat and ear, muscle pain, diarrhea, asthma with a slight crisis, or minor injuries, which are those that are not serious and can be controlled until they are evaluated by a physician. Without timely treatment, an urgency can result in health deterioration and cause a medical emergency.

## **Why is it important to know the difference between a medical emergency and a medical urgency?**

It is important that the difference between the two can be identified, as it can help you decide when to go to an emergency room and when not to. Also, urgencies that can be addressed outside an emergency center could represent substantial savings on your medical expenses.

## What situations could be considered a medical emergency and warrant going to an emergency room?

### The following may be considered a medical emergency:

- Bleeding that won't stop
- Breathing problems (breathing difficulty, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Changes in mental status (such as unusual behavior, confusion, difficulty waking up)
- Chest pain (pain felt somewhere along the front part of the body between the neck and the upper abdomen)
- Asphyxia
- Vomiting blood
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Suicidal or homicidal feelings
- Head or spinal injury
- Severe and persistent vomiting
- Sudden injury due to a car accident, burns, or smoke inhalation, imminent drowning, deep or large wound, etc.
- Sudden and severe pain in any part of the body
- Dizziness, weakness, or a sudden change in vision
- Ingestion of a toxic substance
- Pressure or pain in the upper part of the abdomen

At MCS, we offer you a service that can help you identify situations, so you can be better informed and know what to do in an urgency or medical emergency.

This service is known as MCS Medilínea. It is a call center that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. Through it, health professionals can offer recommendations on your health situations.

### Is there any benefit in calling MCS Medilínea?

**Yes, it is beneficial.** MCS insureds will be able to address their questions and concerns regarding symptom management and medical conditions. You will receive orientation on the best way to proceed. We urge you that in the situations that arise, you evaluate whether it is a medical emergency or a medical urgency before making any decision. If in doubt, use MCS Medilínea before going to an emergency room.

Call **1.866.727.6271**. This number is also located on the back of the plan card.