



# TRINITY HEALTH MUSKEGON

## Emergency Department



**Please read  
this booklet**  
to help you understand  
what will happen  
during your visit.

**Welcome to Trinity Health Muskegon Emergency Department.**

Our doctors, nurses, and support staff understand that medical emergencies can be stressful and confusing. We follow strict rules and procedures to make sure all patients receive the highest quality and safest care as quickly as possible.



## Welcome to the Trinity Health Muskegon Emergency Department

We want to make your visit as easy and comfortable as possible. Please ask questions and let us know how we can make your experience better.

### Please be mindful of the following:

- Our goal is to treat every patient as quickly as possible.
- At certain times, extended wait times are possible.
- Please do not eat or drink until you have asked our staff if it is OK because you may need a procedure or test that requires an empty stomach.
- Restrooms are available. If you need any assistance, please ask our staff to escort you. Before using the restroom, please ask a health care team member if a specimen is required to assist in your diagnosis.
- You may use your cell phone while in the hospital, but please do not use your phone when your health care team members are treating you.
- If your primary care physician or another provider has contacted our hospital regarding your care, we will incorporate their information into your treatment plan. However, we will only perform testing that our team determines medically necessary.

We work closely with our patients to tailor our care to your individual needs. We kindly ask for your help as we work to address your health emergency. Please consider your answers to the following questions while you wait:

- Why are you seeking emergency care today?
- What symptoms are you currently experiencing?
- What other medical conditions are you or your doctor treating?
- What medications are you currently taking?
- Do you have any allergies?

## Stages of Your Emergency Department Patient Journey



### Stage 1: Arrival

When you arrive to the front desk of the Emergency Department, you will first see a registrar and a specially trained triage nurse.

- The registrar checks you in and creates your medical record.

### Stage 2: Triage

A health care team member will bring you to a triage bay for privacy where a nurse will conduct a brief medical history and exam to determine the severity of your condition and how we should begin your care.

- A member of our team will measure your temperature, heart rate, breathing rate, and blood pressure.
- A health care team member will assign you to an appropriate treatment area based on the seriousness of your illness and availability of a bed.
- If a treatment area is not available when your triage nurse completes their work, we will direct you to the waiting area.



**Our Promise:** We Listen. We Partner. We Make it Easy.

## What is taking so long?

### Understanding the Emergency Department Triage Process & Wait Times

It is important to remember that not all emergencies are equally urgent.

Emergency departments triage (prioritize) patients based on need for care. While all patients are important and will receive care, some patients require care more quickly than others (even though they may have arrived at the Emergency Department after you).

When the demand for services is greater than the number of available treatment rooms, extended wait times can occur. In less busy times, we may be able to take you to a treatment room promptly, regardless of the severity of your injury or illness.

While you are in our waiting area, our care team is using this time to evaluate you and prepare you for treatment.

If your condition changes while you are waiting, alert the triage nurse immediately.

**We strongly discourage you from leaving our Emergency Department before receiving treatment.** If you must consider leaving before receiving care, please ensure that you speak with a health care provider first, so that we can fully inform you of any possible complications you may experience.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

### Stage 3: Evaluation

#### Coordinating your care and treatment

Health care team members who have specialized in emergency medicine will welcome you to the treatment area.

The first available physician, resident, or advanced practice provider (nurse practitioner or physician assistant) will examine you.

- Your medical provider may recommend certain tests to help diagnose your condition.
- Tests may include blood samples, urine samples, or an EKG.
- Additional specialized tests, which create pictures of the inside of your body, may include ultrasound, X-ray, CT scan, or MRI.

During periods of extended wait times, we have strict procedures that help us determine the movement of patients from the waiting room to the appropriate treatment area.

### Provider in Triage (PIT) Protocol

- A health care team member will facilitate your move from the waiting room to a PIT treatment area where you will receive a medical screening examination by a physician or advanced practice provider (nurse practitioner or physician assistant). Your medical provider will create a personalized plan of care based on your treatment needs.
- While in the PIT treatment area, your medical provider may order medical tests that will help determine your diagnosis while you wait for the appropriate treatment room.
- Tests may occur at the bedside, while others may require you to visit a different department for testing.
- The PIT treatment room space allows our specialist in emergency medicine to examine you and create a plan of care based on your needs. Upon completion, a health care team member will escort you back to the waiting room or to an open treatment room, when available.

### Stage 4: Registration

Our registrar will meet with you to confirm your address and insurance information. The registrar will prepare a consent form and request your signature giving us permission to treat you in the Emergency Department and to bill your insurance.

### Stage 5: Treatment

**Your care team provides treatment.**

As soon as your laboratory work or imaging results are available, your care team will explain the findings and tell you their diagnosis. Occasionally, an additional test may be necessary. The length of your treatment will vary, depending on your illness or injury and the presence of other critical patients. Please ask your health care provider any questions regarding your test results.



### Stage 6: Discharge

When your care and treatment is complete, your treatment team will review your test results, diagnosis, and any plans for follow-up care with you.

You will receive a copy of your discharge instructions before you leave.

Talk to your nurse or medical provider about any questions or concerns you have about your care or discharge instructions before you leave the Emergency Department.

If your doctor prescribes a medication, your prescription(s) will be sent electronically to the pharmacy of your choice.

### Stage 6: Hospitalization

Sometimes, inpatient hospital care is required. We know this may be unexpected. Please let your care team know if they can assist with phone calls or other ways to help you prepare for your stay.

When your condition requires additional care in the hospital and you need to be kept overnight, please be patient. We will be working to find the right bed for your care based on your diagnosis or planned treatment.

It is possible there may be a wait for the appropriate inpatient room.

**While you are waiting, we will continue to care for you in the Emergency Department exactly as the team would on the inpatient unit. We are not delaying your care.**

Your Emergency Department care team will ensure a smooth transition to the admitting team that will be caring for you.

We recommend that you send personal belongings home with friends or family. Please let your care team know if you need any personal belongings secured that you are unable to send home.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Why am I being asked the same questions so many times?

Excellent communication is key. We need correct, clear, and comprehensive information from you to guide your care in the Emergency Department. Individual health team members may ask the same questions to collect accurate information relevant to your condition which allows us to provide you the safest and best possible care. You can rely on your health care team to listen to you and communicate with each other.

### How long will I be here?

Every patient is different, and there is no way to provide exact estimates of how long your treatment will take. Imaging tests (like X-rays and CT scans) can take several hours to be completed and interpreted by radiology doctors.

Depending on your condition, you may also need to be evaluated by a consulting specialist doctor from outside the Emergency Department, and this may also take several hours. Remember, there is always a health care team responsible for your care, and if you have questions about the next steps in your care, please ask at any time.

### Who is taking care of me in the Emergency Department?

A triage nurse quickly screens every patient and directs patients to the appropriate treatment area. A provider will evaluate you. During this evaluation, an attending physician, physician assistant, or a nurse practitioner may see you. You will always have an assigned registered nurse who will work to assist in your treatment and make sure you are comfortable throughout your visit.

While you are in the Emergency Department, you may also encounter patient transporters, registrars, case managers, radiology technicians, volunteers, and other health care team members, who work together to provide you with the best care possible.

### What can I do if I am having difficulty talking to or understanding my care team?

It is important for you to understand what is happening during your time here. Please let us know how we can help or if there are any words you do not understand. We also offer trained and certified medical interpreters to assist patients or their family members who may have limited English proficiency or are visually or hearing impaired.

## Meds to GO

You can go home with your discharge medications before you leave the hospital and avoid the hassle of driving to a pharmacy on your way home.

### How it Works

- Tell your health care team that you would like to have your prescription(s) filled by our Meds to Go pharmacy.
- Your prescription will be electronically sent to the pharmacy.
- On your way out, pick up your medications from the pharmacy in the Emergency Department waiting area.
- Just like other pharmacies, we submit your prescription information to insurance for billing and co-pay information.
- We accept cash, checks, and credit cards for prescription co-pays. Need financial assistance for co-pay(s)? Call 231-672-7825.
- We can transfer your medication refills to your preferred neighborhood pharmacy.

To learn more about Meds to Go and prescription co-pay assistance, call **231-672-7825**.

**Hours:** Monday–Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Sunday & Holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Trinity Health Emergency Center - Muskegon Hospital

1500 E Sherman Boulevard  
Muskegon, Michigan 49444



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