



Regionaalhaigla

Emergency care in the emergency department (ED)



The North Estonia Medical Centre provides specialty care for nearly 135,000 patients, including 40,000 inpatients with 1250 hospital beds. We have the largest emergency department in Estonia, where medical emergency services are provided in all disciplines, excluding ophthalmology (eye specialist), eye surgery, paediatrics and obstetrics. Emergency care is provided to nearly 80,000 patients per year, with an average of 220 patients per day. The Centre of Emergency Medicine also functions as a national and Tallinn-area disaster medical care centre and our task is to ensure higher medical readiness during state visits and large events.

The Emergency Department (ED) provides emergency care in acute diseases, trauma and intoxication. In accordance with Healthcare Services Organisation Act § 5, emergency care means health services that are provided in situations where postponement of care or failure to provide care may cause the death or permanent damage to the health of the person requiring care.

Emergency care is provided at the ED of Regional hospital to patients from 16 years of age, we therefore ask you to go to the Tallinn Children's Hospital with **children under 16 years**.

Care for emergency patients is provided 24 hours a day. Please take into account that in the ED patients in critical condition are attended outside the general queue and therefore the waiting period of patients with milder conditions may be prolonged. When you are waiting for your turn in the waiting room, the medical staff may be simultaneously busy saving the lives of patients with severe conditions who are brought in by ambulance.

NB! If you feel that your condition deteriorates (disturbing and unbearable pain, inability to sit or stand), inform the waiting room staff about this.



The Regional Hospital ED is divided into three units: intensive care unit, monitoring unit and outpatient unit.

Separate entrances and triage nurse desks are separate for patients who have come on their own and for ambulance patients.

Intensive care unit

The intensive care unit provides necessary initial treatment and diagnostic procedures for the stabilisation of patients in critical conditions. In most cases the hospital has received information about a patient in a critical condition from the ambulance or reanimation team beforehand and upon the arrival of the patient, a skilled team is already prepared. The intensive care unit is equipped with all the necessary equipment and medicines for intensive care.



Monitoring unit

Most patients arrive at the monitoring unit by ambulance. The condition of these patients is not critical, but mostly they need quick help and continuous monitoring due to the nature of the illness or trauma. Separate isolation units are for contagious patients.



Outpatient unit

The outpatient unit offices provide care for patients who are seeking inevitable care by themselves or with a referral letter from a doctor as well as patients in milder conditions who have arrived by ambulance.

The visits to a physician take place in four specially equipped office which each is specialized on serving patients with several different complaints.



Principles of work at the Emergency Department

- **The ED provides emergency care** in acute diseases, trauma and intoxications.
- The task of the ED is **not** finding solutions to your long-term health problems and it is also not faster access to elective medical investigations.
- The aim of investigations is the exclusion or confirmation of acute medical conditions in case of clinical suspicion. No blood test or radiological study is carried out at the sole request of a patient without medical indications.
- If based on the investigations no medical condition requiring rapid intervention and immediate treatment can be found, you will be given further treatment recommendations and recommendations for further investigations, including consultations, which take place on an outpatient basis by a family doctor or a medical specialist.
- A narrow specialty consultation (e.g. neurosurgeon, orthopaedic surgeon and others) take place in the ED only on specific medical indications, which are determined during the visit to the ED doctor and do not rely on the referral letter from a family doctor or the patient's or relatives' wishes.

Which health issues should warrant a visit to your family doctor

- Moderate and/ or persistent pain – headache, joint or lower back pain, earache, sore throat, abdominal pain.
- Trauma not involving swelling, deformation or limited mobility in the injured area; minor trauma.
- Insect bite, including tick bites.
- Blood in stool; threads of blood in sputum; frequent nosebleed episodes.
- Infectious diseases of the upper respiratory system (cold, cough, etc.).
- Stomach viruses or digestive complaints (nausea, vomiting, heartburn, stomach-ache, diarrhoea, etc.).
- Allergy symptoms (dermatitis, asthma, hay fever, rhinitis).
- Cardiac arrhythmias occurring more than 48 hours ago and not accompanied by hypoxia or chest pain, in patients who are not using anticoagulants (blood thinners).
- Frequent urination, discomfort or pressure upon urination, difficulty urinating, genital discharge, suspected STD.
- Decline in visual acuity, discharge from eyes, eye infection.
- Decline in auditory sense, noise/ sounds in ear, discharge from ear.
- Flare-up of chronic illnesses (high arterial blood pressure, etc.).
- Subcutaneous infections (boils, etc.); rosacea, dermatitis; chronic ulcers; herpes.
- Affective disorders – depression, mood disorder, anxiety.

NB! In case of acute health conditions the family doctor must provide visit time during one day, in other cases in 5 working days.

With a referral letter from a family doctor it is possible to register for an outpatient visit to a specialist. In addition to the general queue it is possible to register for a paid visit (including ear-nose-throat specialist, orthopaedic surgeon, neurologist, etc.). Information about visits to medical specialists can be found on the hospital's website www.regionaalhaigla.ee, by phone on 617 1049 and digital registrations www.digiregistratuur.ee.

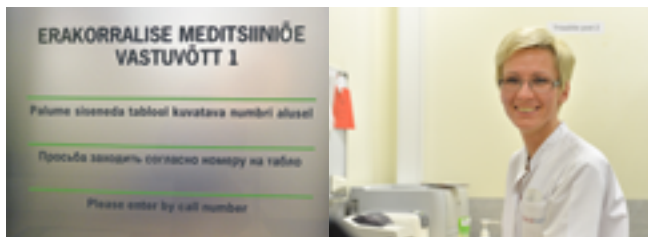
Please note that other healthcare institutions may provide shorter waitlists than the North Estonia Medical Centre. The list of healthcare providers and contacts with the waitlists can be found on the website of the Health Insurance Fund.

Which health issues should warrant a visit to the Emergency Department

- Severe and sudden-onset pain – dull, tight, squeezing or crushing chest pain; severe and oppressive headache with sudden onset, possibly accompanied by vomiting and balance problems; very severe abdominal pain with repeated vomiting; very severe pain that does not respond to orally administered pain relievers.
Note: In the absence of high fever, facial pain (including toothache), pain in limbs and lower back pain are not life-threatening! First consult your GP or ask for advice on the GP telephone hotline, 1220.
- Newly occurred trauma, swelling in the injured area, deformation and limited mobility, wounds, burns, chemical burns, electrical trauma, etc.
- Foreign object lodged in airways, digestive tract or elsewhere in the body.
- Persistent haemorrhage in digestive tract; haemorrhage in urinary and reproductive ducts; acute nosebleed; acute haemoptysis (coughing up blood).
- Stroke symptoms – sudden difficulty with speaking and paralysis on one side of the body, sudden-onset balance problems, dizziness, loss of memory or consciousness.
- Extreme weakness, lethargy.
- Persistent fever of over 38.5 °C that does not respond to fever-reducing medications, high fever in the elderly.
- High fever and/ or constant vomiting in the case of a chemotherapy patient.
- Shortness of breath, hypoxia, severe asthma attack.
- Acute allergic reaction accompanied by hypoxia, extensive rash affecting entire body, swollen tongue, difficulty swallowing, etc.
- Urinary incontinence.
- Cardiac arrhythmias occurring in the last 48 hours or arrhythmias lasting more than 48 hours accompanied by hypoxia or chest pain.
- Symptoms of thrombosis – sudden onset of pain and swelling in extremities, mainly in calf; extremity is cool to the touch and white or reddish-purple in colour.
- Skin infections – extensive suppurative infections (abscess, phlegmon) accompanied by pain and fever and which need to be lanced; infected wound accompanied by fever and swelling spreading rapidly (in a matter of hours) in the injured site.

- Psychological disturbances – acute psychosis (delusions, hallucinations, paranoia); confusion.

The described symptoms may indicate a life-threatening health condition, which mostly involves disorders of the general condition that **prevent the continuation of day-to-day operations** and therefore we recommend calling the ambulance for faster assistance!



If you have come to the ED

- Take a queue number from the machine.
- Provide the customer service agent with **an identity document** (this is mandatory) and pay a visit **fee of 5 euros**. Patients under the age of 18 as well as pregnant patients are not subject to a visit fee.
- If you've come by car to the ED, register your parking ticket at the customer service.
- Then **your health status is assessed by a special triage nurse** who will evaluate your health indicators and decides on the basis of your complaints, whether we are able to provide care and investigations to you in our department or whether you need to turn to your family doctor for an appointment. If necessary, we will give a recommendation on how to handle your condition at home. The nurse determines based on the complaints and critical indicators and according to triage principles (where appropriate, after consultation with a doctor) whether the patient needs immediate management by a doctor or if it can wait for up to 6 hours.

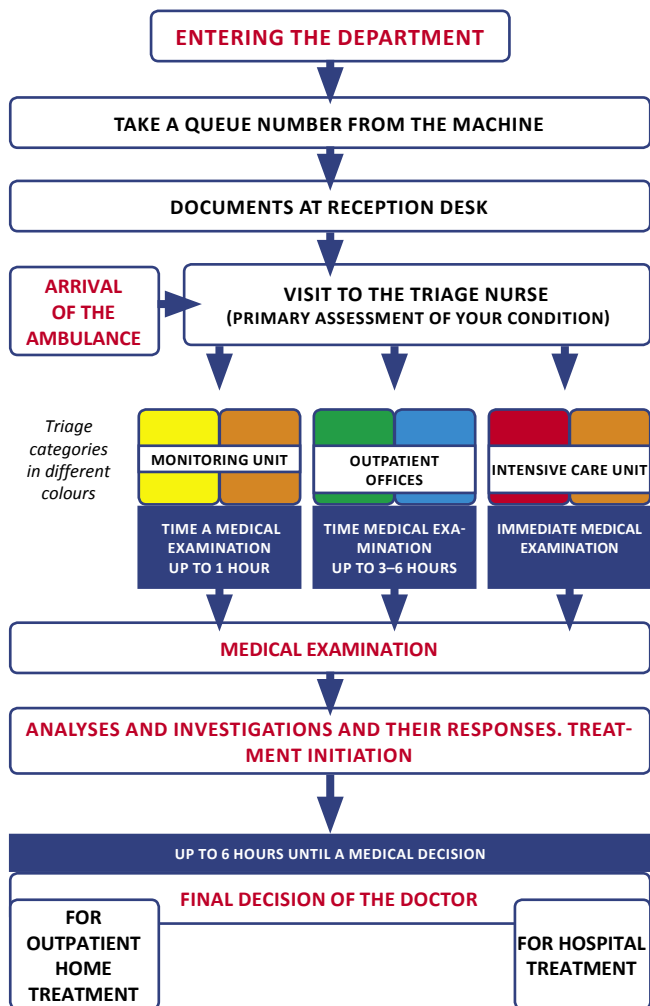
The determination of the status of patients is a 5-step triage category system based on the patient's condition – **red, orange, yellow, green** and **blue**.

- **Based on your health condition you will be directed either to the monitoring unit or patient's waiting area to wait for a visit to a doctor.** Your queue number will appear on the screen next to the door of the office; there is also information on your place in the queue and your triage category. There is a separate queue for every office; patients with more severe conditions are given priority.
- **During the medical examination** the doctor determines necessary initial analyses and radiological (X-ray, ultrasound, CT scan) investigations on the basis of the examination. After giving analyses and investigations you need to wait for the results for an average of 2 to 3 hours. Based on the results of the investigations and after the consultation your further treatment will be decided (inpatient or outpatient care). If you are directed for home treatment and your health condition deteriorates at home, we ask you to contact ED or call an ambulance immediately.

Recommendations

- If your relative is brought to the ED, you can be informed on his or her condition on the phone **617 1369**. Since the results of the medical examination, investigations and analyses can take at least 2–3 hours, it is not reasonable to call earlier. We assure you that your relative is taken care of and he or she is under continuous medical monitoring.
- If the patient remains in the hospital for treatment, then you can receive information about the department phone number on the hospital hotline 617 1300.
- If you come to the ED, be sure to take an identity document along; additionally you should take if possible summaries of previous medical history and the list of medicines used on a daily basis. Also, bring your ATM card or a little cash, so you can pay for the visit fee (children under 18 years and pregnant women are not subject to a fee), buy drinks or snacks from the waiting area vending machine.
- Please take into account that if you are referred to in the help, and allowed home (this can also take place at night), then to return to the home to get close to the car, use public transportation or order a taxi. Be sure to give a contact phone number of your relatives to the medical personnel and take along a charged mobile phone.

Stages in accessing the ED



Paying for healthcare services

The North Estonia Medical Centre accepts the following insurance and guarantees:

- **Estonian Health Insurance Fund health insurance**
- **Health insurance from a European Union member state**, certified by a valid European Health Insurance Card or Provisional Replacement Certificate
Please note: Patients undergoing scheduled procedures must have, in addition to the Health Insurance Card, an E112 or S2 certificate
- **ERGO** insurance certified by a valid ERGO insurance card (validity can be checked at www.ergo.ee/raviabi)
- **TRICARE** letter of guarantee (US/NATO military)
- **Falck Autoabi OÜ** letter of guarantee
- Letter of guarantee issued by the **Defence Resources Agency, the Estonian Defence Forces or Tallinn Prison**

Patients who hold the abovementioned insurance coverage and letters of guarantee pay the co-payment/deductible specified by law or in the insurance policy. The Medical Centre will invoice the insurer or guarantor directly for the balance.

Patients who lack the abovementioned insurance coverage or letter of guarantee shall be provided healthcare services based on the general terms and conditions for provision of paid healthcare services.

Paid healthcare service shall be provided to anyone who expresses a corresponding desire, lacks contraindications for receiving healthcare and who has agreed with the Medical Centre on the provision of paid healthcare services. Patients shall pre-pay for paid healthcare services. The Medical Centre's customer service associate can provide more details about paid healthcare services.

Please note: Finland's KELA card is health insurance only valid within Finland and does not exempt the holder from payment. Nor are KELA forms E106 and E121 (S1) a basis for provision of medical care. This form must first be registered with the Estonian Health Insurance Fund; the person is then entered into the health insurance database and can receive healthcare service upon presentation of an identity document.

Parking

Parking in front of the ED behind the barrier gate is free of charge for patients turning to the ED. If you've come by car to the ED, register your parking ticket at the customer service. Upon departure from the department enter the parking ticket to the pay machine in the waiting area. The pay machine will show a cost of "0" EUR for registered tickets.



Parking in the parking lot in front of the ED behind the barrier gate is free for 15 minutes. This is the time during which it is possible for relatives or a taxi to bring the patient and to come for the patient from the Emergency Department. In this case, you do not need to register your parking ticket.

All others wishing to park in the ED parking need to pay 4 EUR for every starting hour. Before the completion of parking enter the ticket in the pay machine in the waiting area and pay according to the amount displayed on the screen. You can pay for parking only in cash; the machine returns change, if necessary.

Parking in the rest of the North Estonia Medical Centre territory is paid parking that is organised by Citypark Estonia. We ask you to follow the parking conditions established by the operator, including the payment for the parking. The parking area is marked with boards and traffic control devices.

Information about parking conditions and fees, penalties and disputes and other fees, fees for moving and the location of the moved vehicle and the deposited vehicle can be obtained from Citypark Estonia by phone on 673 5000 or email addresspark@citypark.ee.

Regional hospital staff do not deal with parking issues.

In addition to the North Estonia Medical Centre the following hospitals provide emergency care 24 hours a day in Tallinn:

Tallinn Children's Hospital

(Tervise 28).

www.lastehaigla.ee

24-hour emergency care is provided by a paediatrician, a surgeon, a traumatologist and an ear-nose-throat doctor 8–16. Paediatric emergency care is provided for patients up to 18 years; emergency surgical and traumatological care to patients up to 16 years.

East Tallinn Central Hospital Emergency Department

(Ravi 18)

www.itk.ee

24-hour emergency care is provided from the age of 15, except for ear-nose-throat doctor visits. Emergency eye care (eye trauma, eye chemical burns, eye burns, sudden changes in vision, rapid deterioration of vision after eye surgery (if there has been less than 1 month since surgery)) is provided on weekdays, 8–20 and weekends and public holidays 9–20. At other times of the day the nurse of the eye department provides care; where appropriate, an eye doctor will be called from home.

Emergency pregnancy problems can be solved at the Women's Clinic emergency room (obstetric room), where you will be taken care of by the doctor and midwife on call. Emergency care in the Women's Clinic is open 24 hours a day.

West-Tallinn Central Hospital Emergency Department

(Paldiski mnt 68)

www.keskhaigla.ee

24-hour emergency care is provided from the age of 15, except for eye doctor and ear-nose-throat doctor emergency care.

Tallinn residents who lack health insurance can receive free outpatient treatment at **West-Tallinn Central Hospital's Kopli Polyclinic** at Sõle 63. Patients are seen by a surgically trained doctor and a nurse at the following times: Mon, Wed, Thu 10–18; Tue, Fri 8–16. In addition to the general medical examination, if necessary, X-rays, blood and urine tests are done and prescriptions are issued; if possible, free medications are given.

Useful contacts

Emergency services 112
www.112.ee/hairekeskus

Countrywide 24-hour medical counselling on the family doctor counselling phone 1220
www.1220.ee

Intoxication information centre 24-hour helpline 16662
www.16662.ee

Emotional support centre LIFELINE
www.eluiliin.ee
Support line in Estonian 655 8088
Support line in Russian 655 5688

Estonian Health Insurance Fund helpline 13363
www.haigekassa.ee

Ministry of Social Affairs
www.sm.ee

Health Board
www.terviseamet.ee

North Estonia Medical Centre Emergency Department helpline
617 1369

North Estonia Medical Centre helpline
617 1300

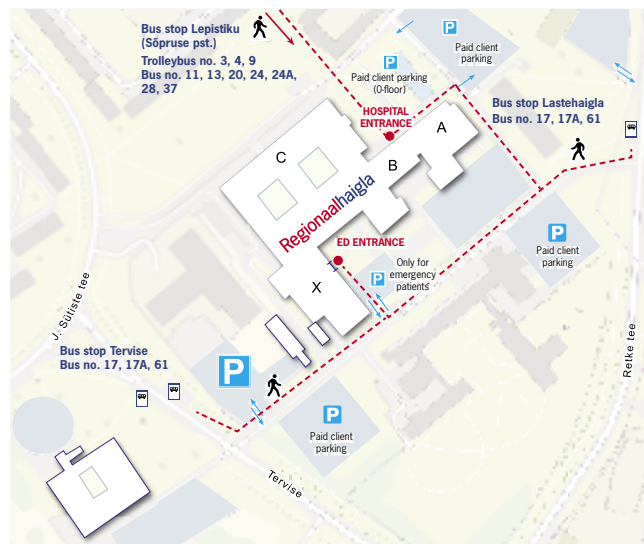
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Chart for entering the ED of the North Estonia Medical Centre



This information leaflet was drawn up
by the North Estonia Medical Centre Emergency Department.

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of the North Estonia Medical Centre on December 10, 2015.