

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 22, 2019

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We invite any media interested in interviewing our VA staff to learn more about care and services to contact our Public Affairs Officer at 989-497-2500, extension 13020 or e-mail carrie.seward@va.gov

Aleda E. Lutz VA Provides Additional Information On Urgent Care Benefit for Veterans

Veterans have a new option for care under the MISSION Act for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses by utilizing Urgent Care in the community.

Although this benefit is new to Veterans, Veterans may still seek treatment through their Primary Care Team, of which the VA offers same-day services during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.

When seeking Community Urgent Care services, a flu shot is covered, however, other vaccines and preventative care services are not. It is important to understand, Urgent Care is not a replacement for VA Primary Care. If you receive services not covered under the urgent care benefit, you may be required to pay the full cost of the care. Remember, a visit to an urgent care is for immediate care needs which are non-life threatening. When in doubt about your health condition or symptoms, Veterans should always seek a higher level of care as they may have symptoms related to a serious health condition that an urgent care provider may not be able to adequately address.

Differences Between Urgent Care and Emergency Care	
Urgent Care	Emergency Care
Urgent care consists of medical services provided for minor illnesses or injuries that are not life-threatening such as strep throat, pink eye, or influenza.	Emergency care consists of hospital care or medical services that a prudent layperson reasonably believes are necessary without delay to avoid hazards to life or health. Examples of conditions or symptoms that justify emergency care include severe chest pain; seizures or loss of awareness; severe headache; heavy uncontrollable bleeding; poisoning; moderate to severe burns, and large broken bones.

If you feel you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please dial 911 or present to your local emergency department for immediate treatment. **IMPORTANT:** VA can only pay for care an eligible Veteran received from a community emergency department in certain circumstances and under specific conditions. Please ensure you identify as a Veteran and request the local emergency department, or a representative, contacts the VA within 72 hours of presenting to the emergency department. For more information about emergency care you may visit:

https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/Emergency_Care.asp

How Do I Know if I'm Eligible for Community Urgent Care? To be eligible for the Urgent Care Benefit, Veterans must be enrolled in the VA healthcare system AND have received care from either a VA provider or from a VA approved community care provider in the past 24 months. If you are unsure of your eligibility status, either you or the urgent care clinic can dial 833.4VETNOW (833.483.8669) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The urgent care provider will verify the Veteran's eligibility before providing care. If a Veteran arrives at an urgent care network location and has any difficulty receiving care, they can call 866-620-2071 to receive assistance.

How Will I Locate an Approved Urgent Care Facility? You do NOT need pre approval to seek urgent care, however; you will need to utilize an urgent care facility which is within the VA network. To find the closed in-network urgent care facility you can visit <https://vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com/> or contact your local VA facility for assistance in locating the closest facility to your location. **NOTE:** you must inform the urgent care provider that you would like to utilize your VA benefit for the visit.

Will a Copayment Apply? Veterans may be charged a copayment for an urgent care visit. This copayment is different from other VA medical copayments. This is dependent on the Veteran's assigned priority group and the number of times per calendar year the

Veteran utilized their urgent care benefit. If a copayment is applied, you are not required to pay at your time of visit; you will receive a bill directly from the VA.

Priority Group(s)	Copayment Amount
1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No copayment for the first three visits during a calendar year. • For four or more visits in a calendar year, the copayment is \$30.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the visit is related to a condition covered by special authority* or exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First three visits (per calendar year), the copayment is \$0. • Fourth and greater visits (per calendar year), the copayment is \$30. • If not related to a condition covered by a special authority* or exposure, the copayment is \$30 per visit.
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copayment is \$30 per visit.
1-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$0 copay for visit consisting of only a flu shot

What About Medications Prescribed by a Community Urgent Care Provider? VA will pay for or fill prescriptions for urgent care for up to a 14-day supply if filled by an in-network pharmacy or at the VA. If the medication supply is longer than 14-days, the prescription must be submitted to the VA for filling. If a prescription is filled at an out-of-network pharmacy, the Veteran must pay out-of-pocket then file a claim for reimbursement with the local VA facility. To file a claim, a copy of the prescription and a copy of the receipt is required. Some Veterans may be required to pay a copayment for medications. To find an in-network pharmacy, you can visit <https://vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com/> or contact your local VA facility for assistance in locating the closest facility to your location.

To learn more about the Urgent Care Benefit, please visit: https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/Urgent_Care.asp

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center, with an additional 8-bed acute medicine and telemetry wing. It provides care to over 36,700 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at www.saginaw.va.gov.

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