



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **PUBLIC URGED TO SEEK ROUTINE MEDICAL CARE FROM PHYSICIANS, URGENT CARE CENTERS**

*Recent Volume of Emergency Department Visits Raises Concerns*

During winter, emergency room visits are typically higher due to a variety of reasons. The level of influenza activity this year is less than previous years, but a variety of medical conditions, including other viral illnesses, also contribute to emergency department crowding.

HHSA recommends that the public seek routine medical attention from their primary care providers or at urgent care centers, leaving emergency departments for severely ill individuals.

Emergency room visits are warranted if you are experiencing shortness of breath, severe weakness, chest pain, or other severe symptoms or injuries. Emergency department visits are appropriate for those with severe illness who may be admitted to the hospital or who need prolonged treatment to avoid hospitalization.

HHSA monitors a number of indicators, including flu and disease surveillance, and ambulance transports to hospitals, that reflect health patterns in the community. These efforts enable the healthcare community to respond quickly to concerns. HHSA meets regularly with the local healthcare community to determine the best strategy when issues arise. HHSA also monitors the data to look for trends.

Currently there are no indications that the current trends are out of range for this time of year, as compared to previous years, or are due to one specific factor. HHSA will continue to monitor the information and will continue to work with local healthcare entities to ensure appropriate response to the healthcare needs of San Diego County residents.

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