



St. Vincenz Hospital, Limburg Emergency Department



Informations for patients and relatives

Dear patient, dear relative,

You have come to the Emergency Department of the St. Vincenz Hospital for help with a medical problem. The Emergency Department is an interdisciplinary facility in which doctors from a variety of specialist departments work with specially trained care staff to provide preliminary diagnostic and treatment services to around 21,000 emergency patients every year. Here, all necessary diagnostic and therapeutic services are found within close proximity of each another and can be administered right up to the point at which you are either admitted as an in-patient or are able to leave the clinic following ambulatory treatment.

The entire team in the Emergency Department is committed to providing you with comprehensive medical care with as short a waiting time as possible.

In emergency care, time is of the essence: Just a few minutes can make all the difference to saving the life of a person. As a general principle, we make every effort to treat patients in the order in which they are admitted. However, every Emergency Department is faced with different peak times, such as lunchtimes, evenings, Wednesday afternoons (in the case of Germany), public holidays and weekends – in other words, times when doctors' surgeries are closed. Despite our best efforts to prepare for these times, it is impossible to foresee exactly how great an influx of patients will be.

As such, longer waiting times cannot be avoided completely. Particularly during times when there is a high patient capacity, we treat our patients according to the type and severity of their injury or illness, rather than the order in which they arrive.

The Emergency Department should not and cannot act as a replacement for your general practitioner. For this purpose, there is a stand-in general practitioner service that you can contact if necessary. However, it goes without saying that we will treat any patient who comes to us in need of help. Despite this, we would appreciate your understanding that in this respect, the care of emergency patients takes priority. Where less serious problems are concerned (such as feverish colds, minor medical problems, etc.), you may expect longer waiting times depending on patient volume.

The St. Vincenz Hospital does not have a main paediatrics department. We would appreciate your understanding that, where necessary, we may need to refer sick children to a nearby paediatrics clinic (such as the Horst-Schmidt-Kliniken in Wiesbaden or the Uni-Klinik in Giessen) following examination and primary care. If required, we will arrange for transportation by ambulance.

On the following pages you will find some more important information on what you can expect to happen while you are at the Emergency Department.

The Emergency Department team hopes you get well soon!

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What happens at the Emergency Department

Initial assessment

So that we can identify patients with critical medical afflictions and ensure that they receive treatment quickly, particularly at times when there is a high volume of patients being admitted, a specially trained member of our nursing staff will firstly ask you some questions regarding your medical problem. At this stage, you will be asked about specific symptoms, and this information will make it possible to assess how urgently treatment is needed. Depending on your symptoms, during a preliminary examination it may also be necessary to take your blood pressure, measure your heart rate, check the oxygen content of your blood or blood sugar level, or take other readings. You may also need to have a blood sample taken. Depending on the severity of your illness and the urgency with which treatment is required, you will then be taken directly to the emergency treatment area. Where less serious illnesses are concerned, you might be asked to take a seat in the waiting area until – depending on the relevant department – the doctor responsible for your treatment becomes available. While you are waiting, the examinations that have been carried out will be evaluated, laboratory results obtained where necessary, and the information presented to the doctor. Since the doctor will already have key information when your examination begins, this speeds up the diagnostic and treatment processes.

Registration

When you register, or someone accompanying you registers for you, your personal details or other information will be collected. In some cases, people express difficulty in understanding why this administrative procedure has to occur at the beginning of treatment. However, it is absolutely essential that we collect your personal details to ensure your security: since many cases require examinations such as laboratory tests and X-ray examinations to be carried out, we need to be absolutely certain that each examination procedure and, in particular, the results of these, are matched to the right patient. Precise identification of patients in this way also enables us to access important information about previous hospital stays. If the severity of your illness is such that you are not able to register yourself, and you do not have anybody accompanying you, your registration will be carried out by a member of the nursing staff. As a general rule, registration is carried out at the service point by the entrance.

Examinations and treatment

Examinations and subsequent treatment are carried out by the doctor from the department that deals with your particular medical problem. Where necessary, he or she will arrange for additional examinations such as EKGs, ultrasounds or X-rays to be performed. Where these cannot be carried out in the Emergency Department itself, the nursing staff will provide you with clear instructions on how to get to the area where they will take place. Once treatment is complete, you will either be able to leave the clinic with a recommendation for types of therapy and a letter for your GP, or you will be admitted as an in-patient. Doctors from a variety of different specialist areas work in the Emergency Department. Since the volume of patients admitted fluctuates, patients being treated by other specialist departments may be taken into the examination area before you, even if they were admitted to the Emergency Department after you were. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Waiting area

For us, the privacy of our patients is of utmost importance. Although visitors may not mean any harm, people who are sick are particularly sensitive to any disruptions caused by outsiders, and this can have a detrimental effect on their health. No patient wants to be subjected to the gazes of strangers when being admitted to hospital, or during examinations and treatment. Because of this, we ask that you do not remain in the corridors outside the examination and treatment areas, or in front of the patient admission and entrance areas. We have provided a waiting area for patients who are mobile, relatives and visitors, and would be grateful if you could remain here during any waiting periods.

Relatives

We would appreciate your understanding that relatives may only be present during emergency examinations and treatment in exceptional cases (for example, children, disoriented patients, or patients with communication difficulties). As a general rule, relatives should remain in the waiting area. We have a deep appreciation for your concerns regarding sick relatives and take your need for information very seriously. However, it is difficult to estimate the duration of an examination as it may be dependent on a number of factors (such as laboratory test or X-ray examination results). As soon as treatment is finished, or should any significant changes occur during the course of the examination or treatment, you will be informed immediately by the nurse or doctor in charge.

General information/questions

If you have any questions or issues that are not directly concerned with the medical treatment process, the employees at the entrance or service point of the patient admissions area will be glad to provide you with further assistance.

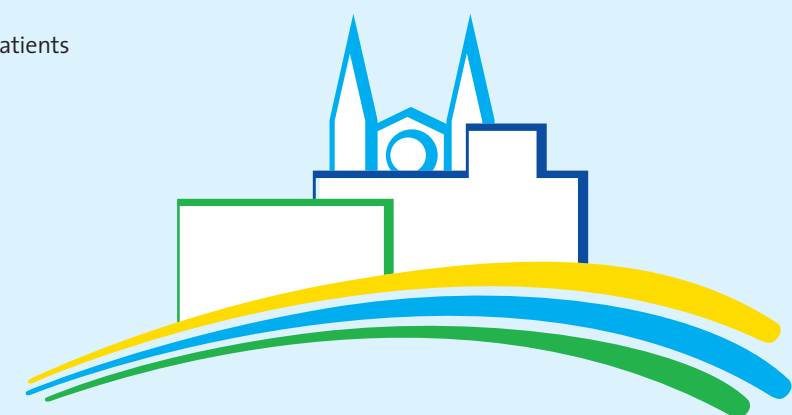
Entrance area

In addition to another waiting area, in the entrance area you will find a card-operated telephone and a cash point. Smoking is permitted in the zone in front of the main entrance, where you will find a canopied smoking shelter.



Cafeteria

You can access the cafeteria directly from the entrance area. It can be used by patients and relatives on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., and on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.



GERMAN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
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