



TIPS

from the Consumer Health Action Network

June 2007

“Convenient Care” Clinics – What you should know

What is a Convenient Care Clinic?

Convenient Care Clinics are health care clinics located in large retail stores, supermarkets and pharmacies that treat routine illnesses and provide preventative health care services. They are sometimes called “retail health clinics” or “walk-in clinics.” Anyone can walk in without an appointment and receive medical treatment. You don’t have to have insurance coverage. Usually they have available a list of services and prices posted, and are open some nights and weekends. The clinics are often staffed by skilled nurse practitioners, who can diagnose minor ailments and write prescriptions (which can usually be filled right there). **It is important to tell your doctor when you have gone to a clinic, including any services you received. You should also tell the clinic who your primary care doctor is.**

When should I NOT use a convenient care clinic?

Walk-in clinics are not a substitute for a doctor or hospital! If someone has a life threatening medical emergency, **do not** take them to a clinic. These clinics do not have the facilities or the equipment to handle medical emergencies. You should call 911 or go immediately to the hospital emergency room for serious medical problems, such as:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life-threatening injuries• Major burns• Childbirth | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug or other poisoning• Severe chest pain and shortness of breath |
|--|---|

When **SHOULD** I use a convenient care clinic, instead of the hospital or a doctor’s visit?

Convenient Care Clinics are available to treat problems that may require medical attention, but are not life threatening:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor burns• Flu and cold symptoms• Earache, sore throat, or fever• Allergies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pinkeye• Immunizations• Blood pressure checks• Infections |
|--|--|

Where can I find a convenient care clinic near me?

- Call INFOLINE at 211 for a listing of walk in clinics near you, or
- Call the Consumer Health Action Network - 772-2817 (in New Haven) or 1-888-873-4585 (toll free) for more detailed information about special programs in your area