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## After-hours healthcare options

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### Summary

- In an emergency, always call triple zero (000).
  - For unexpected after-hours medical issues that are not emergencies, there are telephone helplines, pharmacies, supercare pharmacies, after-hours medical clinics, and doctors who can visit you at home.
  - For advice about a health issue, phone NURSE-ON-CALL 1300 60 60 24.
  - For medication, bandages or advice about small injuries, contact a pharmacy that is open after hours.
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If you need help for an unexpected medical issue, there are after-hours healthcare options that don't involve a trip to a hospital emergency department. These options include telephone helplines, pharmacies, after-hours doctor and medical clinics, or a doctor visiting you at home.

For unexpected medical issues that are not an emergency, there are services that may offer a quicker response than a hospital emergency room.

### When emergency medical help is required

If you or someone you know is having a life-threatening medical issue or is experiencing severe pain, call triple zero (000) or visit the emergency department of your nearest public hospital for urgent medical treatment.

Some private hospitals may have emergency departments and charge fees for medical services, which may not be covered by Medicare. If you are uncertain and if you can, ask the triage nurse about costs when you arrive.

### Helpline for non-urgent medical issues

If you have questions about a medical issue, you can call the helpline NURSE-ON-CALL for advice and assistance. NURSE-ON-CALL is a phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This helpline is can be accessed for the cost of a local or mobile phone call:

#### **NURSE-ON-CALL**

Tel: **1300 60 60 24**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### Pharmacists and Supercare Pharmacies

Talking to a **pharmacist** can be the easiest way to receive advice and treatment for minor injuries and ailments.

A pharmacist may be able to help with healthcare issues like headaches, coughs or colds.

Pharmacists can recommend and provide over-the-counter medication, such as pain relief. For help with minor injuries and ailments, medical supplies, such as bandages and dressings, are also available.

A growing number of pharmacists are trained to administer standard vaccines such as flu and whooping cough. As of 12 August 2018, the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine is also being made accessible from some pharmacies.

Some pharmacies stay open after standard business hours.

Twenty Supercare Pharmacies operate across Victoria. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and provide a free nursing service, daily from 6pm to 10pm.

### **Find out more about the location and services of Supercare Pharmacies.**

If you have an ongoing medical issue or injury, you should follow up with your doctor.

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## After-hours medical clinics

Some medical clinics stay open in the evenings and on weekends, which can be a good option for people who need to see a doctor after hours for non-emergency medical treatment.

Always call beforehand to find out:

- if you can make an appointment
- how long you are likely to have to wait to see a doctor
- if the clinic bulk bills or how much you have to pay.

## Home visits from an after-hours doctor

General practices often provide after-hours services. When you visit your regular general practitioner, ask what after-hours services they offer. If you telephone your general practice after hours, it will probably have a message service telling you of the available or alternative services to contact.

If your regular general practice does offer after-hours care, keep the contact number in a safe place in case you need it in the future.

If your regular GP does not provide after-hours care, you may be able to book a doctor to visit you at home between 6.00 pm and early morning through one of the services listed below. Not all home visit services cover all areas. Check with each service to see if your suburb or area is covered.

A home visit may be bulk-billed if you are registered with Medicare or Veterans Affairs. If you are not registered with either, you can ask about costs before you book.

### DoctorDoctor

Call 13 26 60

Visit <https://www.doctordocor.com.au/>

### My Home GP

Call 1300 968 737

Visit <http://www.myhomegp.com.au>

### National Home Doctor

Call 13 7245

Visit <http://www.homedocor.com.au>

## Where to get help

- In an emergency, always call triple zero (**000**)
- Your GP (doctor)
- Pharmacist
- **NURSE-ON-CALL**, Tel: **1300 60 60 24** – for expert health information and advice (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

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