You're suddenly feeling dizzy and a little out of sorts.
Should you head to urgent care, or is it an emergency?

Certain symptoms merit immediate medical attention. The National Institutes of Health recommends calling 911 if you experience any of these symptoms, which constitute an emergency:

- Choking
- Electric shock or lightning strike
- Head injury accompanied by fainting, confusion, or passing out
- Injury to the neck or spine
- Seizure lasting three to five minutes
- Severe burn
- Severe chest pain or pressure
- Stoppage of breathing

- Seizures
- Severe allergic reaction with difficulty breathing, swelling or hives
- Smoke or poisonous fume inhalation
- Sudden confusion
- Sudden inability to speak, see, walk or move
- Sudden weakness or drooping on one side of the body
- Suicidal thoughts
- Throwing up or loose stools that don't stop
- Unusual or particularly bad headache, especially with a sudden onset

The symptoms outlined above aren't the only reasons to seek emergency care. Other symptoms aren't as urgent, but still require a prompt diagnosis and treatment. These symptoms include:

- Coughing or throwing up blood
- Croup
- Deep wound
- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness or weakness that doesn't go away
- Heavy bleeding
- High fever that doesn't improve with medication
- High fever with headache and stiff neck
- Pain in the arm, neck, shoulders or jaw
- Passing out or fainting
- Poisoning or overdose
- Possible broken bone accompanied by a loss of movement or a bone poking through the skin

When to Turn to Urgent Care or Primary Care

Most symptoms related to minor health issues can wait until your primary care provider's regular office hours or be taken care of in an urgent care setting.

That includes symptoms of common illnesses such as the flu, the common cold, COVID-19, earaches, sore throats, stomach bugs, urinary tract infections, headaches, low fevers, and rashes. Minor injuries, including sprains, back pain, minor cuts and burns, and some broken bones, can also be treated during regular office hours.

The key is that these health issues are non-life threatening. If you've had an accident or are under the weather and experiencing symptoms that could threaten your life, don't wait to seek care.

When you need emergency medical care, West Tennessee Healthcare is here to help. There are West Tennessee Healthcare emergency rooms throughout the region. To make an appointment with a Primary Care Provider call (833)-383-9864.

West Tennessee HEALTHCARE™