# **Urgent care? ER? 9-1-1? Know who to call and when**

By MOJGAN MOHANDESI, M.D.

When you are sick or in pain, it can be hard to know where to turn. Learn the difference between the emergency room (ER) and urgent care clinics right now, so you have that information at your fingertips later.

Unless you have a lifethreatening emergency, please start with your doctor's office. They know your health history and can help choose the right tests and treatments.

Our clinic is set up for same-day appointments, but we can also arrange a visit at Salem Hospital Convenient Care—or help you decide if the ER is the best option. Staffs at any medical clinic will quickly help sort everything out when you call, including getting you into a clinic as quickly as possible.

The Salem Clinic also follows this approach and has an urgent care clinic in Keizer. But what if you need help when your doctor's office is closed?

If your problem is not life-threatening and you can't see your regular doctor right away, call the nearest urgent or convenient care clinic. They should see you on the same day you make the appointment. They have X-ray and lab services like a hospital, but often without the long wait time or expense of going to the ER.

Urgent/convenient care clinics are a good first stop for those suffering from flu symptoms, minor burns, cuts needing stitches, strain/sprain, vomiting among situations that require immediate attention.

If your symptoms come on gradually, or have had similar symptoms before, try getting a same day appointment with your primary care provider because they have your history.

The emergency room is the best place for treating severe and life-threatening conditions—and, Salem Hospital's ER is also a level II trauma center with the range needed, including diagnostic tests, specialists and the option to be admitted to the hospital for more treatment.

Even if your condition is an emergency, you may not be seen right away. The most severely ill or injured patients are always seen first. Go to the ER or call 911 for an ambulance if it's life-threatening:

Never drive to the ER if you or a loved one faces life-threatening conditions. Ambulances come equipped to begin lifesaving care on their way to the ER and will prep ER staff so they know what to expect.

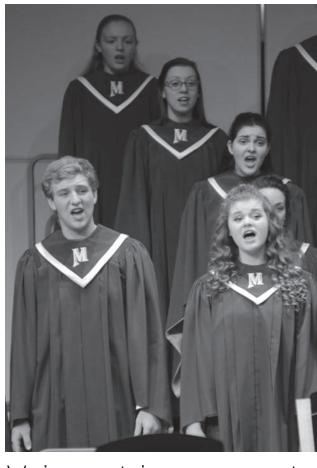
Be prepared.

Regardless of where you go, keep an updated list of your allergies and medications with you, including dosages and any over-the-counter medications and vitamins. Many medications, and even vitamins, can interact with the treatment options your physician plans to

For a list of urgent and convenient care clinics in Keizer and Salem visit keizertimes.com.

(Mojgan Mohandesi, M.D. is a physician at Willamette Health Partners Family Medicine in Keizer.)





### Voices, strings resonate in MHS winter concert

Members of the McNary High School choirs and orchestra performed their annual Christmas concerts to packed houses the week before Christmas.

Left: Members of the orchestra get a moment in the spotlight. Above: The choir's soloists take center stage.

KEIZERTIMES/Fric A. Howald

### Salem Library camp-in for week without screens

In return for pledging to go a week without screens of any kind, kids and teens will get the chance to camp out at Salem Public Library Friday, Jan. 30.

Pledges will be accepted at the Youth Services desk until the beginning of "No Screens" week, Jan. 24–30.

Participants who successfully refrain from TV, movies and other screens, will qualify for the camp-in. Registration for the camp-in begins Tuesday, Jan. 27.

More information is available at www.salemlibrary.org.

#### New show, classes at KAA

The start of the 2015 show schedule for Keizer Art Association in January features artwork depicting *Snow and Ice*.

The Artists' Reception is slated Saturday, Jan. 3, from 2 to 4 p.m. Artists are encouraged to attend the reception as other guests enjoy visiting with them about their art.

Classes on tap for January at

KAA include: colored pencil, woodcarving, seed beading and peyote stitch jewelry, calligraphy, stippling, pen and ink with watercolor, and watercolor painting. More info at keizerarts.com.

The gallery is open Thursdays and Fridays 1 to 4 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Keizer Heritage Center.

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