



# ADULT TRIAGE PROTOCOL

System	Level	Priority
<b>Head</b>		
Growth, abnormal, head, neck, mouth area	II	24-72 hours
Headache of acute onset, unusually severe, temperature > 101°F, neurologic changes, GI symptoms	III	Immediate
Headache, chronic, recurrent, not associated with GI symptoms, neurologic changes or fever	I	Routine
Headache, chronic, with change in pattern	II	24-72 hours
Headache, moderate to severe	III	Same day
Headache, new onset, without neurologic changes, fever or GI symptoms	III	Same day
Lacerations	III	Same day
Sinusitis	II	Same day
Tension headache, mild	I	Routine
Trauma associated with change in mental status, vomiting, bleeding, unequal pupils, loss of consciousness	III	Immediate
Trauma with minor mechanism, stable vital signs, no loss of consciousness, no change in mental status, no abnormal neurologic signs	I	Same day
<b>Eyes</b>		
Chemical exposures	III	Immediate
Conjunctivitis with severe discomfort	III	Same day
Diplopia, acute	III	Same day
Eye pain, acute, severe	III	Same day
Fluctuant lesion	III	Same day
Foreign body	III	Same day
Itchy eyes, mild, associated with symptoms of URI, without change in visual acuity	I	24-72 hours
Loss of vision, sudden	III	Immediate
Red eye	III	Same day

System	Level	Priority
Stye	I	Routine
Trauma, severe	III	Immediate
Vision impairment (not of recent onset)	I	Routine
Visual acuity change associated with trauma	III	Immediate
Visual acuity change, recent, not associated with trauma	II	Same day
<b>Ears</b>		
Cerumen impaction	I	24-72 hours
Earache	II	Same day
Fever, high, with bloody discharge	III	Same day
Foreign body	III	Same day
Hearing loss, gradual (over more than three months) in patient older than 65 years with clear auditory canals	I	Routine
Hearing loss, sudden	III	Same day
Otitis media	I	Same day
Trauma	III	Same day
<b>Nose</b>		
Epistaxis, controllable in 15 minutes	I	Same day
Epistaxis, recurrent and well controlled, history of	I	Routine
Epistaxis, uncontrollable	III	Immediate
Foreign body	III	Same day
Rhinitis, allergic	I	Routine
Rhinitis, chronic recurrent	II	Same day
Trauma, acute	II	Same day
<b>Throat</b>		
Aphthous ulcers or stomatitis	I	Same day
Candidiasis, oral	II	Same day
Inability to swallow, with drooling	III	Immediate
Loss of voice, gradual	II	24-72 hours

**Key to levels:** I:physician or MLP II:physician or MLP with physician consult III:physician

**Note:** Handle the second triage (walk-in) visit for same problem within three months as a level-III visit.

continued ➤

## ADULT TRIAGE PROTOCOL continued

System	Level	Priority
Pharyngitis with abscess	III	Same day
Sore throat	I	Same day
Strep test, positive	I	Same day
<b>Pulmonary system</b>		
Abnormal breath sound	II	Same day
Cough unresolved with treatment	II	Same day
Cough, acute or chronic, with fever	II	Same day
Cough, chronic, with no fever	I	24-72 hours
Hemoptysis	III	Same day
Respiratory distress, moderate	III	Same day
Respiratory distress, severe	III	Immediate
Shortness of breath, chronic, without distress or acute change	II	24-72 hours
<b>Heart</b>		
Abnormal pulse, symptomatic	III	Immediate
Chest pain, acute, with risk factors	III	Immediate
Chest pain, mild, in patient < 40 years old with no cardiac history nor risk factors AND one of the following: 1. Pain is associated with mild anxiety or mild trauma sustained more than 2 days ago. 2. Pain is chronic and recurrent for more than 2 months without change.	II	24-72 hours
Heart rate > 110 or < 50	II	Same day
Heart rate > 150 or < 40, asymptomatic	III	Same day
<b>Cardiovascular system</b>		
Blood pressure > 170/105 but < 190/115	II	Same day
Blood pressure > 190/115	III	Immediate
Deep venous thrombosis	III	Same day
Hypertension, controlled, stable; patient wants follow-up	I	Routine
Pulseless, cold extremity	III	Immediate
Syncope	III	Immediate
Thrombophlebitis	III	Same day
<b>Gastrointestinal system</b>		
Abdominal mass	II	Same day

System	Level	Priority
Abdominal pain, chronic, no change	I	24-72 hours
Abdominal pain, chronic, with change	II	Same day
Acute abdomen	III	Immediate
Change in stools	II	24-72 hours
Choking	III	Immediate
Constipation, chronic	I	Routine
Diarrhea without blood	I	24-72 hours
Diarrhea, prolonged	II	Same day
Gastroenteritis, acute, with symptoms of dehydration	II	Same day
GI bleeding	III	Immediate
Hemorrhoids, painful	II	Same day
Hemorrhoids, uncomplicated	I	24-72 hours
Melena, intermittent, stable	II	Same day
Melena, unstable	III	Immediate
Tenesmus	II	24-72 hours
Vomiting, protracted	III	Immediate
<b>Genitourinary system</b>		
Hernia, incarcerated	III	Immediate
Impotence	II	Routine
Inability to void	III	Immediate
Incontinence of recent onset	II	Same day
Incontinence, chronic, mild	I	Routine
Incontinence, chronic, significant	II	24-72 hours
Kidney stone	III	Immediate
Perineal lesions	II	Same day
Priapism	III	Immediate
Prostatitis, simple	II	Same day
Scrotal pain	III	Immediate
STD, suspected	II	Same day
Urethritis	I	Same day
UTI, uncomplicated	I	Same day
<b>Gynecologic problems</b>		
Abnormal uterine bleeding, asymptomatic	III	Same day

**Key to levels:** I:physician or MLP II:physician or MLP with physician consult III:physician

**Note:** Handle the second triage (walk-in) visit for same problem within three months as a level-III visit.

continued 

## ADULT TRIAGE PROTOCOL continued

System	Level	Priority
Amenorrhea with severe abdominal pain	III	Immediate
Amenorrhea without pain	II	24-72 hours
Breast mass	II	Same day
Breast pain without signs of infection	II	24-72 hours
Childbirth, pending	III	Immediate
Menopausal symptoms	II	Routine
Menstrual cramps without severe pain	I	24-72 hours
Perineal lesions	II	Same day
PID	III	Same day
PMS, uncomplicated	I	Routine
Pregnancy	I	Same day
Vaginal bleeding with dizziness, abdominal pain	III	Immediate
Vaginal discharge without blood or abdominal pain	I	Same day
Vaginitis	I	Same day
<b>Musculoskeletal system</b>		
Compartment syndrome	III	Immediate
Cramping pain in muscles	I	24-72 hours
Fracture or dislocation	III	Same day
Fracture, unstable (open fracture, pulseless)	III	Immediate
Ingrown toenail	III	24-72 hours
Low-back pain without neurologic symptoms, chronic	I	Routine
Musculoskeletal pain or change in function, acute	II	Same day
Musculoskeletal pain, chronic	I	Routine
Osteoarthritis, uncomplicated	I	24-72 hours
Osteoporosis	I	Routine
Swelling, uncomplicated, no signs of infection	I	24-72 hours
Swollen extremity, acute	III	Same day
Trauma > 10 days ago with no acute change	II	24-72 hours

System	Level	Priority
<b>Neurologic system</b>		
Cerebrovascular accident, acute	III	Immediate
Dementia or confusion, acute	III	Same day
Dizziness, chronic recurrent	II	24-72 hours
Fainting, history of, now stable	II	Same day
Headache of acute onset, unusually severe, temperature > 101°F, neurologic changes, GI symptoms	III	Immediate
Headache, chronic, recurrent, not associated with GI symptoms, neurologic changes or fever	I	Routine
Headache, new onset, without neurologic changes, fever or GI symptoms	III	Same day
Herpes zoster	II	Same day
Loss of consciousness < 12 hours	III	Immediate
Meningitis	III	Immediate
Mental status change, acute	III	Same day
Paresthesias, chronic	II	Routine
Seizing, active	III	Immediate
Seizures, history of (none in 6 months)	II	24-72 hours
Tension headache, mild	I	Routine
Tremor, chronic, without change	II	24-72 hours
Vertigo, acute	II	Same day
<b>Psychosocial problems</b>		
Abuse, suspected	II	Same day
Anxiety, chronic	I	Routine
Anxiety, moderate to severe	II	Same day
Depression, mild, with no suicidal ideation	II	24-72 hours
Depression, moderate to severe	II	Same day
Drug overdose	III	Immediate
Emotional lability	II	Same day
Insomnia, chronic	I	Routine
Mental status change, acute	III	Same day
Potential suicide	II	Same day
Suicidal or homicidal	III	Immediate

**Key to levels:** I:physician or MLP II:physician or MLP with physician consult III:physician

**Note:** Handle the second triage (walk-in) visit for same problem within three months as a level-III visit.

continued 

## ADULT TRIAGE PROTOCOL continued

System	Level	Priority
<b>Skin</b>		
Acne, mild	I	Routine
Acne, significant	II	24-72 hours
Bite, animal	II	Same day
Bite, human	III	Immediate
Bite, insect,with local reaction	II	Same day
Burns, acute second- or third-degree	II	Immediate
Cellulitis, extensive or severe	III	Immediate
Cellulitis, mild,without fever or compromise of function	II	Same day
Dandruff	I	24-72 hours
Ingrown toenail	III	24-72 hours
Laceration with bleeding	III	Immediate
Moles, warts or subcutaneous nodules, long-standing and unchanged	II	Routine
Open wound,laceration,abscess	III	Same day
Pruritus, chronic	II	Routine
Rash,acute, symptomatic	II	Same day
Rash,recurrent,nonspecific,without signs of infection,blisters or boils	II	Routine
<b>Lymphatic system</b>		
Lymphadenopathy, acute	II	Same day
<b>Endocrine system</b>		
Anemia responding to treatment	I	Routine
Diabetes mellitus, controlled	I	Routine
Diabetes mellitus, uncontrolled	II	Same day
Hyper- or hypoglycemia with symptoms	III	Immediate
Hyperlipidemia,controlled	II	Routine
Hypothyroidism,controlled	I	Routine
Thyrotoxicosis	III	Immediate
<b>Special geriatric problems</b>		
Abuse	II	Same day
Fall,recent	II	Same day
Mental status change, acute	III	Same day

System	Level	Priority
<b>Signs and symptoms</b>		
Abnormal pulse, symptomatic	III	Immediate
Blood pressure > 170/105 but < 190/115	II	Same day
Blood pressure > 190/115	III	Immediate
Dehydration	III	Immediate
Fatigue, mild and chronic	I	Routine
Heart rate > 110 or < 50	II	Same day
Heart rate > 150 or < 40, asymptomatic	III	Same day
Sepsis	III	Immediate
Temperature > 101°F	II	Same day
Temperature > 103°F	III	Immediate
Unstable patient	III	Immediate
Weakness or fatigue, increasing	II	24-72 hours
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Alcohol abuse, chronic,stable	I	Routine
Anaphylaxis	III	Immediate
Bleeding,active	III	Immediate
Drug overdose	III	Immediate
Fatigue, mild and chronic	I	Routine
Pain,severe	III	Immediate
Patient education	I	Routine
Physical exam:health maintenance, employment or baseline	I	Routine
Suture removal	III	Same day
Tobacco abuse without severe health problems	I	Routine
Weakness or fatigue, increasing	II	24-72 hours
Weight reduction	I	Routine

**Key to levels:** I:physician or MLP II:physician or MLP with physician consult III:physician

**Note:** Handle the second triage (walk-in) visit for same problem within three months as a level-III visit.