



**Third Coast  
Family Practice**  
Craig Matheson, D.O.

***RE: Emergency Room Visits v On-Call Provider by Telephone***

Dear New Patient,

Doctors, hospital and insurance companies are working together to encourage patients to seek the most appropriate level of care for their needs. You may not always know when it is better to go to a hospital emergency department, or when you should contact us first. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some information that we hope will help you navigate that decision.

Whenever you need health care, we encourage you to call our office first (231-757-2500). If the office is open we can help by either scheduling you to be seen that day, or by providing triage and treatment recommendations over the phone. This year we extended our business hours and have increased access to Same Day appointments:

<b>Mondays &amp; Tuesdays</b>	<b>7:30 am – 6:30 pm</b>
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>7:30 – 11 am and Noon – 7:30 pm</b>
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>7:30 am – 4 pm</b>
<b>Fridays</b>	<b>8:15 am – 4 pm</b>

If the office is closed, a recorded message will give you instructions including how to speak with us by telephone after hours so that we can make a decision together about whether or not you need to go to the Emergency Department.

The only time we would not want you to call us first, is if the circumstances require a call to 911 so that an ambulance can attend to you immediately. Examples of this type of circumstance would be: symptoms of a stroke or heart attack, loss of consciousness, trauma resulting in uncontrolled bleeding or inability to walk.

I hope this information helps you to make good choices about when it is necessary to go to the hospital for care. If we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Craig K. Matheson, DO, PLLC

Laura E. Hall, DNP, NP-C