

Emergency Care

10 tips to get the best results from your Emergency Department (ED) visit



1. **Call the IHTC first.** The IHTC staff will call ahead to the Emergency Department staff so that they know you are coming, your diagnosis, the nature of your medical issues and specific needs. This call from the center may help decrease anxiety of ER staff who may not treat individuals with bleeding disorders every day.

2. **Items to take to the ED:**

- Factor concentrate if stored at home
- Medication list
- Any medical records you have including a travel letter or comprehensive clinic report
- Insurance information
- Any special medical supplies such as port needles, **and**
- Patience: Emergency rooms are very busy places; even if they do not seem crowded to you there may be very ill patients requiring immediate attention. Your medical issues are important but remember that emergency rooms are required to triage patients so that the most critical are treated first.

Keeping many of these supplies in a bag that is easy to grab in case of an emergency may be helpful.

3. In most cases, you will be more knowledgeable about your bleeding disorder than the ED staff. Remember you live with this disorder every day and the ED staff may see very few individuals with bleeding disorders. This does not mean that the ED staff is not knowledgeable. Provide information about your disorder and explain your specific needs.

4. Keep in mind that there may be other patient emergencies in the ED such as individuals with a heart attack or stroke – these patients may take priority over your issue.

5. **Stay calm and treat the staff as you wish to be treated.** Being confrontational or emotional sets a negative tone. Offering to help and being friendly often gets the best results. If you are not seen promptly, politely ask the nursing staff if the ED is backed up and how long your wait may be.

6. Bring your own factor if possible to avoid mistakes. If the ED supplies your factor then have them show you the box and mix it in front of you.

7. Ask ED care provider if they have spoken to the IHTC before you are treated. This avoids being sent home without a required follow-up treatment plan or a required test.

8. Remember that the majority of invasive procedures require pretreatment with factor concentrate. An exception would include a venipuncture for drawing blood.

9. Emergency department visits may take several hours. Take something to do while you are waiting if you are well enough.

10. If you have a negative experience, please report this to the IHTC so that we can determine how it should be addressed. Some issues to consider include:

- What in your opinion did not go well?
- Was it a specific person problem or a system problem?

The IHTC can offer specific services to your ED tailored to address specific issues and avoid future problems.