**What is “triage” and why is it important?**

Just like at a human ER, we see patients based on the severity of their condition, starting with animals who are experiencing life-threatening illnesses or injuries. Our team will perform an initial evaluation of your pet and assign a level of severity to them. This process is called “triage” and it helps us know how quickly your pet needs to be seen by a veterinarian.

You’re worried about your pet—we are, too! Below is a summary of the levels of severity, the order in which they are typically seen, and examples of common conditions. If your pet is assigned a less severe score, there might be other resources available to you, including Urgent Care appointments or seeing your primary veterinarian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEVERITY</th>
<th>ORDER SEEN</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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</table>
| **Stat** | Seen Before All Patients | - Cardiac arrest  
- Respiratory distress  
- Severe blood clots  
- Pale gums  
- Bloat  
- Lying on side and not responding  
- Visible internal organs  
- Hit by vehicle and not walking |
| **Critical** | Time Sensitive After “Stat” Patients | - Critically abnormal vitals  
- Acting dizzy or drunk  
- Having a seizure  
- Unable to urinate  
- Fracture with bone exposed  
- Eye out of socket  
- Toxin ingestion  
- Severe pain |
| **Intensive** | Seen After “Stat” and “Critical” Patients | - Not eating or drinking  
- Vomiting  
- Toxin ingestion without symptoms  
- Paralyzed  
- Known foreign body ingestion  
- Moderate pain  
- Allergic reactions  
- Nosebleeds  
- Fractures |
| **Urgent** | Seen Before “Stable” Patients | - Difficulty walking  
- Decreased appetite  
- Black stool or liquid diarrhea  
- Sudden and persistent limping  
- New, unexplained bruising  
- Dehydration  
- Severe itching  
- Head tilt |
| **Stable** | Last to Be Seen in ER | - Local swelling, redness, or discomfort  
- Soft stool  
- Mild discomfort or itching  
- Head shaking  
- Chronic limping  
- Chronic coughing |