



# DEKALB COUNTY 911 NURSE NAVIGATION PROGRAM

DeKalb County, in collaboration with American Medical Response, is launching an innovative program to provide residents with a variety of options for quickly reaching the appropriate level of medical care when calling 911. Based on the description of your symptoms, you may be transferred to a Nurse Navigator who will work with you to determine an appropriate path for treatment and assist in coordinating that care.

## What is the DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation Program?

The Nurse Navigation program gets you to the right level of care, which may or may not include transportation to a hospital emergency department. 911 calls with non-emergency injuries or illnesses may be transferred to a Nurse Navigator who can assess your symptoms and refer you to the most appropriate medical care. This care could include referral to a local clinic or urgent care.

## When should I call 911?

You should only call 911 for a serious medical emergency that you believe is life threatening or that may be or become life threatening, for example:

- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain
- Heart attack
- Cardiac arrest
- Fainting
- A severe allergic reaction
- Injuries from a fall or accident
- Seizures
- Severe pain
- Other urgent matters

You should not call 911 for minor illnesses or injuries, for example, a cold, a minor cut or for a routine medical matter that can be addressed through an appointment with a primary care physician.

## Will DeKalb County EMS providers still respond and transport me to a hospital if I call 911?

If your condition is an urgent, life threatening or potentially life-threatening emergency, the 911 center will dispatch DeKalb County EMS first responders who will assess your symptoms, and possibly transport you to the hospital directly.

If your condition is not a medical emergency, you may be transferred to the **DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation** Program and the Nurse Navigators will assess your symptoms and determine the most appropriate medical care for your condition.

## How will it be determined whether I will be transferred to DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation?

The 911 operator will triage your condition by using industry best practice medical protocols and questions to thoroughly evaluate your medical symptoms. The results of that protocol-driven evaluation of your specific medical symptoms will determine the best course of care for you.

## How will a determination be made about which medical clinic I will be referred to?

The Nurse Navigator will connect you to the most appropriate level of care available, taking into account your existing primary care provider (if any), the location where you last received care, your location, the time of day and the availability of healthcare providers.

## Will the nurse schedule a clinic appointment for me at the medical clinic at a predetermined time? Will the staff know when I will arrive and why?

Each clinic has walk-in appointments that will be available for **DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation** patients. The Nurse Navigator will notify the clinic that you are on the way, provide your estimated time of arrival and the reason(s) you are seeking medical care. Upon your arrival, you will be seen as soon as possible.

## Will the medical providers be able to prescribe medication during my visit?

Yes, the selected medical providers will be licensed and able to prescribe medications for treatment.

## Should I call 911 to schedule any follow-up or future appointments at the medical clinic in which I was seen?

No. You should schedule all follow-up medical appointments directly with the medical clinic in which you were seen, and where you are now a registered patient, or with any other non-emergency healthcare facilities that the clinic may refer you to.

## What happens if the nurse at the DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation Program determines that my condition warrants transport to a hospital emergency department?

Nurse Navigators with the **DeKalb County 911 Nurse Navigation** Program should only receive calls that would typically be best handled in a non-emergency healthcare environment as opposed to a hospital emergency room setting. However, if the Nurse Navigator determines that your condition is of an urgent or emergency nature that should best be treated at a hospital or that you should be assessed by DeKalb County EMS first responders, we will immediately dispatch an EMS unit to you.

## What are the qualifications of the Nurse Navigators?

The Nurse Navigators are licensed Registered Nurses by the State of Georgia and have professional experience in emergency nursing. They are also specially trained in the practice of telephone triage.

## If I talk to the nurse and still want to be transported to the hospital by ambulance, what happens then?

The Nurse Navigator will work with you to determine the most appropriate level of care for you. If during that process you or the nurse determines that an ambulance is needed then one will be dispatched.

For more information, contact **DeKalb County Fire Rescue** at **678-406-7750**.