

## Visit to the doctor

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In Germany, you may choose your own physician. In most cases your first visit is to your general practitioner. If necessary, he or she will refer you to a specialist or arrange for you to be admitted to a hospital. To find the right physician, consult the following:

- the website of your town or city
- the Bertelsmann Stiftung's **Weisse Liste** [↗](#) (White List)
- **Unabhängige Patientenberatung** [↗](#) (Independent Advice for Patients)
- the website of your state's Kassenärztliche Vereinigung (Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians, KV)
- the telephone book under "Physicians" or the **telephone book website** [↗](#)

When you have found a physician, call his or her office and make an appointment; this avoids a long wait. In urgent cases, however, you can walk in without an appointment.

### What if you need a physician after hours?

You need medical care, but your physician's office is closed? In that case, dial 116 117 for an on-call physician; the number is valid throughout Germany. The call is free from land lines and mobile phones, and is available to all patients with statutory or private health insurance. In case of an emergency – a life-threatening situation – you should instead dial the emergency number 112.

### The cost of an office visit

As a patient covered by statutory health insurance, you will have almost no out-of-pocket expenses. Rather than billing you, your physician will submit a bill directly to your health insurance.

### Vaccinations and preventative care

Of course, it's much better not to get sick. Vaccinations and health screenings can prevent many illnesses. Vaccinations are not required in Germany, but some are recommended; health insurance covers their cost. Information about recommended vaccinations is available from the Federal Centre for Health Education or your physician.

A vaccination record shows the diseases against which you have been vaccinated. Various screenings are also available, some of them required by law. For infants and children, there are the U1 to U9 screenings, which help to identify developmental disorders and illnesses at an early stage so that they can be treated. There are numerous screenings for adults as well, for skin cancer and dental problems, for example. Statutory health insurances often offer a bonus if you are regularly screened.

## Information on the web

### **National Association of Statutory Health Insurance Funds**

An overview of all statutory health insurances

### **Federal Government**

Nationally valid number for reaching an on-call physician

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### **EURES**

Information about the German healthcare system

### **Federal Ministry of Health**

Helpline for questions on the healthcare system

The Electronic Health Card

### **Kassenzahnärztliche Bundesvereinigung**

Searching for a dentist in Germany

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<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/healthcare/visit-doctor>

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