



Banner Thunderbird
Medical Center

Emergency Services

Life is unpredictable. That's why the Emergency department at Banner Thunderbird Medical Center is here to help you handle life's unforeseen events. From playground injuries to larger mishaps or even managing an ongoing illness, the qualified and dedicated medical personnel are here to help you.

Featuring board-certified emergency physicians, specialty-trained nurses and support staff, the Emergency department at Banner Thunderbird is well-equipped to diagnose and treat an array of injuries and illnesses.

Banner Thunderbird's Emergency department has:

- 72 Treatment Bays
- Four Major Treatment rooms
- Full medical imaging capabilities, including X-ray, computerized tomography (CT), ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- A separate pediatric emergency waiting room and treatment area

Adults and children are cared for by experienced physicians and registered nurses certified in both Adult and Pediatric Life Support. Emergency technicians and members of other specialty areas are also a part of the Emergency department.

The walk-in entrance to the Emergency department is located on the southeast corner of the campus, on the first floor of the hospital's new South Tower. Banner Thunderbird's new tower also features two rooftop helipads for emergency air transport.

The Emergency Center Experience

Upon arrival, patients are greeted by a "quick look" registered nurse and a "quick registration" clerk. The nurse asks patients a few screening questions regarding the reason for their visit. The registration process begins by gathering just the necessary information to begin a patient's medical chart. Each patient then receives an identification bracelet.

The "quick look" nurse may ask a few more screening questions while obtaining the patient's blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate, temperature, weight/height and allergies. Our goal is for patients to move directly to a private treatment bay after this step.

If there is a delay in a room assignment, patients will be moved to the lobby area until a treatment bay becomes available. It is important that patients or family members notify someone in the department immediately if symptoms change or worsen.



On average, patients in Banner Thunderbird's Emergency department are seen by a physician in approximately 30 minutes. Wait times for patients will vary depending on how busy the department is and the severity of the illness.

Please remember that patients with serious injuries or illnesses are given priority over other patients. As a result, the time from arrival to seeing a physician may vary.

In the Emergency department, physicians direct patient care at all times. Other members of the care team may include a registered nurse, physician assistant, registered nurse practitioner, and medical or radiology technician.

Once in a treatment bay, the patient will receive a more thorough examination. During the exam, the physician will obtain the patient's medical history and may decide to speak with a patient's personal physician. It may be necessary to order blood tests, X-rays or other tests.

A registration clerk will visit the patient in the treatment area to gather additional information, including address, phone number and insurance information.

Many problems can be diagnosed and treated in the Emergency department. In these cases, a nurse or physician will review the "discharge instructions" with the patient prior to discharge. It is extremely important for patients to follow these instructions carefully.

If the patient has a serious illness or injury, such as a heart attack or stroke, they may need to be admitted to the hospital for ongoing care. Treatment given on an emergency basis is often just the first step in the treatment process, and follow-up visits with a personal physician is usually advised.

Technologically Advanced

Our Emergency department utilizes an electronic medical records (EMR) system to ensure quick, accurate and safe care. Our EMR system allows nurses and physicians to assess injuries and medical conditions, order necessary tests and medications, and provide the best quality care for the patient as rapidly as possible. Information gathered from previous visits, such as blood type, prescribed drugs, medical conditions and other aspects of a patient's medical history, can be quickly accessed to provide a better picture of the patient's current condition.



Banner Thunderbird's Emergency department includes a separate waiting and treatment area exclusively for children and their parents. The waiting area (pictured above) features colorful décor, child-size furniture, flat screen televisions and children's books and toys.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Emergency Department

Why can't patients eat or drink while they are waiting?

Answer: Patients might be asked to refrain from eating or drinking because their physical condition may require testing or surgery. Please check with the physician or the nurse about eating or drinking.

How do I get copies of my medical records or X-rays after I'm discharged?

Answer: Patients can pick up copies of their medical records, as well as their cath lab and endoscopy medical images, from the Release of Information office, located next to Patient Registration inside the hospital's east entrance. A release of information form will need to be signed before receiving the records. Depending on the size of the record, there may also be a small copying fee. For questions, please call 602-865-5795.

Copies of all other medical images can be picked up from the Medical Imaging department, which is located near the main entrance (west of the main information desk). They can be reached at 602-865-5524.

Who can help with concerns or comments about care in the Emergency department?

Answer: We welcome questions and concerns - they help us improve our care. If patients or visitors do not feel comfortable talking with the staff providing treatment, they can speak with a manager, the department director or Patient Relations. Each is available by dialing the hospital operator, or by asking the nurse.

Why can't you give any medical information over the phone?

Answer: To maintain the safety and confidentiality of our patients, we do not provide any information regarding the reason for the patient's visit, specific treatment being provided, or discharge plans. Visitors may want to contact the patient, or a family member, directly to get more information.