Welcome to the Emergency department at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center, where our primary goal is to ensure our patients receive the highest quality medical care in a safe and comfortable environment. For generations, the southeast Texas community has turned to us to provide emergency care for critically ill or injured adults and children, and we are proud to partner with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School to bring you the world-class expertise of affiliated specialists across many fields, including emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, infectious diseases, nephrology, neurology, neurosurgery, transplant, orthopedics, cardiology and pediatrics.

Level I Trauma Center
Our state-of-the-art facility is the only hospital in southeast Texas to carry the Level I trauma center designation for both pediatric and adult patients by the American College of Surgeons, which is the highest level of emergency care available. This means you and your loved ones at every stage of life have around-the-clock access to one of the most comprehensive and extensively trained medical teams in the country, who are ready to quickly assess and treat the most serious of medical conditions.

The trauma center at Memorial Hermann-TMC is home to the Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute – Texas’ first and only trauma institute. The Institute is built on a long-term collaboration between our Campus and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School and provides rapid intervention for the most acute pediatric and adult cases. The Institute’s John S. Dunn Sr. Burn Center is the only comprehensive and verified burn center in the Greater Houston area. As a Level I trauma facility, the Institute not only offers comprehensive emergency care, but through its academic partner UTHealth, also offers trauma and preventive health education,
a surgical residency program and a fully integrated research program that helps us bring the latest medical advancements directly to patients.

**Your Emergency Services Healthcare Team**
Our experienced team is the longstanding leader in providing emergency care to our community. All of the affiliated physicians in our Emergency department are either board certified or board eligible in emergency services, and we are fully staffed by emergency medicine-trained professionals including registered nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and technicians.

**Life Flight®**
Memorial Hermann-TMC is the home of Life Flight and the John S. Dunn Helistop, which is the busiest hospital-based heliport in the United States. Life Flight is the only hospital-based air ambulance serving the Greater Houston area, and is a CAMTS-accredited critical care air medical transport service that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Each flight is staffed by highly skilled personnel, is equipped with advanced emergency equipment and medications, and can transport up to two patients. The Memorial Hermann Life Flight staff consists of 20 pilots, 20 flight nurses, 18 paramedics, 9 dispatchers and 7 mechanics. Our fleet of six state-of-the-art helicopters is inspected and serviced daily. Since its inception in 1972, Life Flight has flown over 160,000 missions, all as a community service provided by Memorial Hermann and its philanthropic partners. Life Flight’s operating costs average $5 million annually, none of which comes from tax dollars.
What to Expect When You Visit the Emergency Department

We understand that any medical situation that involves a trip to the emergency room can be frightening and overwhelming. That’s why it’s our goal to do everything possible to provide you with as much information as possible regarding what to expect during your visit.

Arrival and Triage
Upon arrival in the Emergency department, the triage nurse at the welcome desk will assess your condition and evaluate the urgency of your medical needs. All of our patients are treated as if they are emergent; however, those with the most life-threatening illnesses and injuries are cared for first – this process is called triage. As part of the medical assessment, the triage nurse will take your vital signs and ask about your condition and medical history. This information will help the care team to prioritize your care appropriately.

While you are triaged by the nurse, a business office representative will begin setting up your hospital medical record by getting simple information such as your full name, date of birth and Social Security number.

Communication and Wait Times
Please be assured that we do everything possible to treat each of our patients safely, efficiently and quickly. However, those patients with the most life-threatening conditions must be cared for first. This could mean that someone who arrives after you is treated before you.

At a Level I trauma center in a community the size of the Greater Houston area, the number of patients that are waiting for care and the severity of their illnesses or injuries can change very quickly and is quite unpredictable. Unfortunately, this can make it difficult to provide an exact estimate for wait times. Depending upon the number of patients in the Emergency department, the severity of their condition, the number of tests required, and multiple other factors, wait times can sometimes last more than several hours. To reduce wait times, our hospital has created the Rapid Treatment Area (RTA) – a dedicated treatment area for less acute emergencies.
If you are asked to wait, please know that we are committed to making you as comfortable and informed as possible. The triage desk will communicate with you regularly regarding your estimated wait time, but if you start to feel worse during your wait, please let the triage nurse know immediately.

**Diagnosis and Treatment**

Once you are taken to a treatment room, a nurse will assess you and may ask for further information about your medical history. Because we serve as the primary teaching hospital for UTHealth Medical School, you may be seen by a fellow, intern, resident or medical student, who will examine you and discuss your care with your attending physician (also known as your primary physician). Your attending physician is responsible for overseeing your care during your stay and will order any necessary tests and work with you to make all decisions about your treatment.

Diagnostic tests you may undergo could include an X-ray, ultrasound, CT scan, MRI and/or lab tests on your blood. Most of these tests are either performed at the bedside or in our Radiology department, located within the Emergency department.

Based on the results of any tests and your attending physician’s diagnosis, you will either be treated and discharged with instructions for caring for yourself at home, or you will be admitted to the hospital.

**If You are Admitted**

If your physician thinks you need further care or observation, you may be admitted to the hospital. Once the physician submits admission orders, the Admissions department will begin the work to assign you to a room. Your nurse will keep you informed about any wait times and will keep you as comfortable as possible.

**If You Are Discharged**

Once your diagnosis and treatment are complete, your physician will write orders for your discharge. Before you leave, your nurse will talk
with you about follow-up care, including medications, diet and how to care for yourself at home. We are here to help and care about your health and wellbeing, so if you have questions or concerns, please be sure to ask.

**Interpreters**
The Interpreter Services department is available at no cost 24 hours a day to provide or arrange for interpreters to assist hearing impaired and limited English proficiency patients and staff in multiple languages, including American Sign Language. If you require an interpreter, please let the triage nurse know.

**Visitors**
At the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus, we believe that when friends, family members and caregivers work together, patients experience a higher level of quality care, a faster recovery time and a shorter hospital stay. Visitors are welcome in the waiting room, and up to two visitors may accompany you in the treatment areas.

To ensure patient safety and privacy, the care team may ask visitors to step outside from time to time while you are receiving care. Although our nurses try to keep friends and family regularly informed about each patient’s condition, visitors should feel free to ask the triage desk if they are concerned or anxious.

**Your Comfort During Your Stay**
We want you to be as comfortable as possible during your visit to the Emergency department and have a variety of amenities available. We offer blankets, tissues and reading materials at the triage desk.

In addition to the care team in the Emergency department, we have provided a team of customer service representatives that can assist you with any requests you may have to make your stay more comfortable. As the patient’s advocate, our Guest Services representatives help patients and families solve problems, facilitate communication among departments, and deal with concerns and unmet needs. If you need assistance, call 713.704.4540.
We are dedicated to making your visit as pleasant as possible. If there is anything we can do to improve your experience, call extension 4.CARE (2273) from any house phone or dial 713.704.2273. Specially trained customer service representatives will document your request, contact the responsible department to address the issue, and follow up with you with an estimated time of completion.
Financial Information

About Your Bill
As a patient receiving services at the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus, you are ultimately responsible for the charges associated with your treatment and care. We will send you a summary patient statement following your discharge. Detailed information about your charges is available by request. If you have a question or wish to request an itemized statement, please contact Patient Business Services/Customer Service by calling 713.448.5502 or 1.800.526.2121 (toll free), or sending an email to patient.billing@memorialhermann.org.

If You Are Insured
Memorial Hermann will file insurance claims for most primary and secondary carriers. We will also verify your benefits and request authorization for services according to your insurance plan’s requirements. You can help us maximize your benefits by:
- Familiarizing yourself with the terms of your insurance plan’s coverage and any policy limitations
- Informing us by contacting our Business Office whenever your insurance carrier or coverage changes
- Reviewing all correspondence from your insurance company, including Explanation of Benefits (EOB) as well as any other insurance correspondence that may indicate a problem in processing your hospital or physician charges

If your insurance company delays payment for more than 60 days, we may be required to seek payment from you directly.

If You Are Not Insured
For elective medical treatment, you and/or your physician’s office should contact our Business Office at 713.448.5502 at least five days in advance to request a quote for treatment. Our Business Office representatives will collect the necessary information to provide you with a quote for the treatment you request and will assist you with options for payment. To prevent delays in your desired treatment date for elective procedures, please ensure that you have made arrangements with the Business Office regarding your financial obligations. For emergency medical treatment, business office representatives will meet with you to provide information about options to help you meet your financial obligations. Payment options for treatment resulting from a medical emergency may include government funding for Texas residents, Crime Victims assistance, Medicare, counseling on continuation of benefits (COBRA) and/or cash pay quotes. Your Business Office representative will provide you with information on the Harris County Gold Card program (if you are a Harris County resident) and on the Memorial Hermann Charity program. For more information, please call 713.704.3916.
Dining Options

*Café Hermann* is located on the 1st floor between the Jones and Robertson Pavilions and offers a varied, full-service breakfast, lunch and dinner menu that includes entrees, pizza, grilled items and a salad bar. Hours are from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. daily.

*Brioche Dorée* is located on the 2nd floor of Cullen Pavilion and offers sandwiches, pastries, desserts and gourmet coffee, including cappuccino and espresso. Hours are Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

A large vending machine room is open 24 hours a day on the 1st floor of Roberson Pavilion next to Café Hermann.
**Parking**

If you parked in the patient drop-off area just outside the Emergency department, please make sure the vehicle is there no longer than 15 minutes or it will be towed at the owner’s expense. These spaces are not intended for short-term or long-term parking, they are for loading and unloading those patients who need emergency care but did not arrive by ambulance. For patient safety reasons, it’s very important that these spaces are available for those who need them. If you need assistance moving your car, please let the triage desk know and someone will be happy to help you.

The most convenient self-parking to the Emergency department is in Texas Medical Center Garage 4, which can be accessed from either Cambridge Street or Ross Sterling Drive. Self-parking in Garage 4 costs a maximum of $12 per day. Handicapped parking is available in all Texas Medical Center garages for patients and visitors whose vehicles are equipped with disability designation license plates and tags.

Hospital valet parking is available at the Fannin Street entrance at the corner of Fannin and Cambridge, but there is no in-and-out access. The valet hours of operation are from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday, and from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday.