

Table of Contents

Health	2
General information on health	2
Health insurance	2
Visit to the doctor	3
Electronic patient file (ePA)	4
Medicines and pharmacies	6
Emergency numbers - SOS	6
Counselling centres and offers of help	7
Social psychiatric service	7
Addiction counselling	7
Midwifery centre Emsland	8
Children's network Emsland	8
Violence against women helpline	9
Helpline for pregnant women in need	9
The family guide	9
breastcare app	9
Care support centre	10

Health

General information on health

You live in Germany and have an acute illness and pain. Then you are entitled to basic medical care. Some vaccinations and check-ups are recommended by the state. They are intended to prevent illness. You are entitled to recommended immunisations and preventive check-ups.

Consult a doctor if:

- You are acutely ill or in pain
- you are pregnant
- you are chronically ill
- You need a vaccination

You still have medication? Do you still have the package leaflet for your medication? Bring them with you when you visit the doctor.

Have you already been to a doctor or hospital because of your illness? Please bring the findings with you.

Do you have a residence permit? Then you must register with a regular [health insurance company](#). There you will receive an insurance card. This entitles you to services from doctors. Just like all citizens in Germany.

Refugees and asylum seekers are not yet covered by health insurance. They need a treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city/municipality](#). You can then use it to go to your family doctor.

The guidebook "[Health for asylum seekers](#)" informs asylum seekers about the main features of health care in Germany and what to do if you fall ill. It provides information on how to protect your own health and on the necessary mandatory initial examination after arrival in Germany. The guide is available in 6 languages.

The guide "[Health for all](#)" provides information on health insurance and preventive medical care. It also explains what to do in an emergency. The guide is available in 15 languages.

Here you will find "[Information films on health](#)" with information on the health system, pregnancy and birth, healthy teeth, cancer prevention and much more. The films are available in 8 languages.

Health insurance

Insurance is compulsory in Germany. Do you have a residence permit? Then the social welfare office will register you with a health insurance fund. The health insurance company will issue you with an insurance card. You can use the insurance card to see a family doctor. If necessary, the doctor will refer you to a specialist.

Insurance card

You can use your insurance card to access medical services. The work of the doctors is paid for by the insurance company. You must take the insurance card with you to your appointment with

a doctor.

The European Health Insurance Card is on the back. You can use it to see a doctor in any EU country. You can obtain information on this from your health insurance company.

Are you travelling to a country outside the EU? Then you can take out additional health insurance for your trip. This is called international health insurance.

Refugees and asylum seekers are not yet covered by health insurance. They need a medical treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city / municipality](#). You can then use it to go to your family doctor.

You can find a guide to health insurance here: [Health insurance guide](#)
The guide is available in different languages.

Visit to the doctor

General practitioners and specialists

If you are ill, you go to a doctor's surgery (general practitioner). You can choose the doctor's surgery yourself. Doctors set their own opening hours. Do you want your family doctor to help you? Then make an appointment.

General practitioners carry out important examinations. They are your first point of contact in the event of illness. They decide on the medication you need. They decide whether a specialist examination is necessary.

If necessary, your GP will refer you to a specialist. They can carry out specialised examinations.

You can search for a family doctor here: [Arztauskunft-Niedersachsen](#) (German-speaking only)

Is the doctor's surgery closed?

The medical on-call service can help you by calling:  [116117](#)

You can also search for an emergency practice here: [Notdienstpraxen](#) (multilingual)

There are doctors who can also help outside opening hours.

Paediatricians and paediatricians

Children are examined by paediatricians. There are prescribed examinations. These are important for your child's health. The examinations always take place at a certain age. They are intended to prevent illnesses in children. Children must be immunised. Immunisations are important. They prevent children from getting certain diseases. They are free of charge. Please consult a paediatrician for more information.

You can also find a paediatrician in the [Arztauskunft Niedersachsen](#).

Dentists and dentists

Do you have a toothache? Then go and see a dentist.

Dentist search: [Zahnarztauskunft-Niedersachsen](#)

Gynaecologist and gynaecologist

It is important that women are regularly examined by a gynaecologist. This allows diseases to be recognised early. This is called a check-up. You can also discuss the topic of contraception there.

Do you need help finding a suitable gynaecologist? Ask your support group or the counsellor in your accommodation. You can also find a gynaecologist in the [Arztauskunft Niedersachsen](#).

Important!

💡 When visiting a doctor, please present your health insurance card.

💡 Are you an asylum seeker? Are you ill and need to see a doctor? Then you will need a treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city / municipality](#). The doctor's visit is then free of charge for you.

💡 Is an operation necessary? An operation is carried out in a hospital. If it is **not an emergency**, the social welfare office must authorise your stay in hospital beforehand. Before you go to hospital, you must apply for authorisation from the social welfare office. Your doctor will issue you with a medical certificate for this purpose. The social welfare office will only cover medically necessary interventions.

Electronic patient file (ePA)

From **15 January 2025**, a new digital patient file called the **electronic patient file (ePA)** will be introduced in Germany. This file will store all important health data, such as what the doctor has found out about your health, what medication you are taking or what examinations you have had.

Everyone with statutory health insurance automatically receives this ePA. If you do not want this, you can object.

Doctors and patients can access health data quickly and easily via the ePA. But only people who are authorised to do so are allowed to see the data. This keeps the data secure.

How can insured persons refuse to set up an ePA? What deadlines apply?

If someone no longer wants to use the ePA at a later date, they can have it deleted. The aim is to enable doctors and patients to work together faster and better to improve health.

If someone wants to refuse the ePA, they must inform their health insurance company. If they do not do this, the EPR will be created automatically.

Important details about the EPC. What do you need to bear in mind?

Contents of the EPA:

- All important information from your visits to the doctor is automatically included in the EPR if it is available in digital form. This means, for example, that findings or diagnoses that the doctor writes down are transferred to the EPR.

- You can also upload information such as vital signs (e.g. your height or weight) or older medical documents to the ePA yourself.
- From 2025, there will be an automatic overview of all the medication you are taking. This will later be supplemented by a special medication plan.

Access rights:

- You can specify which doctors or hospitals are authorised to access your ePA. If you want to make changes, you can do this via the ePA app or contact the ombudsman's office of your health insurance company.
- If your health card is read at a doctor's surgery or hospital, they will have temporary access to your ePA for 90 days unless you object.

Use and accessibility:

- You can manage the ePA via a special app on your smartphone. Each statutory health insurance fund offers its own ePA app, which you can download free of charge from the App Store (for iOS) or the Google Play Store (for Android).
- If you do not have a smartphone, you can get support from pharmacies or special centres to access your ePA.

Legal regulations:

- The introduction of the ePA will initially begin in Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia. It will then be available throughout Germany from February 2025.
- Privately insured persons can also use an ePA, although this depends on the insurance company in question.

Advantages:

- The ePA facilitates communication between doctors, hospitals and other medical facilities. It gives you a better overview of your health data.
- The ePA also increases the safety and accuracy of medication.

Challenges:

- Not all documents, such as old paper medical reports, are automatically digitised. However, you can ask your health insurance provider whether they can take over digitisation.
- There may be technical difficulties at the beginning because some doctors have to adapt their practice software.
- Another problem is that there is no multilingual information, i.e. no translations into other languages.

The ePA is an important step towards digitalisation in the healthcare sector. It should improve medical care. It also provides a basis for research.

Would you like to find out more? You can find more information here:

- [!\[\]\(3d0946c14414af438def0008e8322b30_img.jpg\) FAQ of the Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians](#)
- [!\[\]\(828aaf7b071d1ea02a45562329097457_img.jpg\) Questions and answers on the electronic patient file \(ePA\) by the KBV](#)
- [!\[\]\(56451d82e6dfba768ba6cc341b9dc91e_img.jpg\) Information from the consumer advice centre about the ePA](#)

Medicines and pharmacies

Do you need medication? Then go to your doctor. They will give you a prescription. You can get your medication with this prescription at any pharmacy. Pharmacies are usually open from Monday to Saturday. The opening hours of pharmacies vary. Do you urgently need medication at night or at the weekend? Every pharmacy has a sign with the name and address of the pharmacy that is open on emergency duty. You can also find this information on the Internet.

Search for pharmacies on emergency duty: www.aponet.de

💡 As an asylum seeker, you will receive many medications without a co-payment. You should therefore check with your doctor. If you do not have a prescription, you will always have to pay for the medication.

Emergency numbers - SOS

An emergency is an acute threat to health.

You only call an emergency doctor in the event of an emergency with an acute health threat. The emergency doctor will come with the ambulance service. If you are in pain and there is no acute threat to your health, go to a GP.

Emergency contacts

Fire brigade, rescue service, emergency doctor 📞 [112](tel:112)

Police 📞 [110](tel:110)

The emergency numbers on mobile phones always work.

Don't have any credit on your mobile phone? The number still works!

Important information for an emergency call

- **Who** is calling (your name)?
- **Where** has something happened (address)?
- **What** has happened?
- **How many** injured or sick people are there?
- **What kind** of illnesses or injuries are there?
- **Wait** for further questions!

Remain calm. Speak slowly and clearly. Then you will be better understood. Do not end the conversation. Wait for further questions. The emergency call centre / police will end the call when all the important information has been conveyed.

Are you going to hospital? Don't forget your identity card or proof of arrival. Are you registered with a health insurance company? Take your insurance card with you.

💡 As an asylum seeker, you may only go to hospital in an emergency without a treatment voucher. You must show your proof of arrival at the hospital. The hospital will then recognise

that you are seeking asylum. The costs will be paid by the social welfare office.

Counselling centres and offers of help

Social psychiatric service

Mental illness can affect anyone. They are becoming increasingly common. Early information about help and treatment options is therefore very important. The Social Psychiatric Service (SPDI) is happy to accompany, advise and support you! Counselling is free and confidential.

The service offers the following help:

- Individual counselling
- Home visits
- crisis service
- Accompanying help
- Groups for those affected and relatives

The aim is to help you to help yourself and to enable you to lead your life as independently as possible.

Do you have difficulties in everyday life due to your illness? Or do you need advice and support in dealing with someone who is ill? Then please get in touch:

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/441188](tel:05931/441188)

 [@gesundheitspdi@emsland.de](mailto:gesundheitspdi@emsland.de)

 www.emsland.de

Addiction counselling

There are counselling centres for all aspects of addiction. They offer advice and help with questions. Do you want to change the way you deal with alcohol, drugs, medication or gambling? Do you suffer from eating disorders? Are you looking for a way out of addiction? Do you need support? Then contact the addiction counselling service.

Here you will find the following counselling centres on the subject of addiction:

Caritas Beratungsstelle Papenburg

 Kirchstraße 16, 26871 Papenburg

 [04961/94410](tel:04961/94410)

 [@sucht.pbg@caritas-os.de](mailto:sucht.pbg@caritas-os.de)

Diakonisches Werk Meppen

 Bahnhofstraße 29, 49716 Meppen

 [05931/98150](tel:05931/98150)

 [@dw.meppen@diakonie-emsland.de](mailto:dw.meppen@diakonie-emsland.de)

Caritas Beratungsstelle Meppen

 Kuhstraße 42, 49716 Meppen

 [05931/984240](tel:05931984240)

 [@sucht.mep@caritas-os.de](mailto:sucht.mep@caritas-os.de)

Diakonisches Werk Emsland Bentheim

 Bögenstraße 7, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

 [0591/800410](tel:0591800410)

 [@dw-lingen@diakonie-emsland.de](mailto:dw-lingen@diakonie-emsland.de)

Caritas Beratungsstelle Lingen

 Burgstraße 30, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

 [0591/80062300](tel:059180062300)

 [@sucht.lin@caritas-os.de](mailto:sucht.lin@caritas-os.de)

Midwifery centre Emsland

A midwife supports the pregnant woman during pregnancy. She helps with complaints during pregnancy and offers a birth preparation course. You will be looked after by a midwife during the birth. A birth takes place in hospital, in a birthing centre or at home. After the birth, the midwife will come to your home. She will support you during the first few weeks with the baby. The services are paid for by the health insurance company.

The Emsland Midwife Centre will help you find a midwife. The work of the midwife centre is free of charge.

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/442181](tel:05931442181)

 [@hebammenzentrale@emsland.de](mailto:hebammenzentrale@emsland.de)

 www.hebammenzentrale-emsland.de

Telephone switchboard hours:

 Tuesday 12:00 - 16:00

 Wednesday 10:00 - 12:30

 Thursday 10:00 - 12:30

Children's network Emsland

Kindernetz Emsland is a counselling service for families with children. The children's network is a team of doctors, midwives and paediatric nurses. The service is aimed at families with children aged 0 to 3.

Are you in a stressful situation after the birth? Do you feel insecure and overwhelmed? You can't ask anyone for advice? Then contact us. We provide help and support.

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/441181](tel:05931441181)

@kindernetz@emsland.de

www.kindernetz-emsland.de

Violence against women helpline

The violence against women helpline advises women affected throughout Germany. The counsellors provide advice on all forms of violence against women. Do you need help where you live? Then the counsellors will refer you to suitable local facilities. Online counselling is also possible via the website. The counselling sessions are confidential. Would you like to remain anonymous? That's no problem. You don't have to give any personal details on the phone. This also applies on the website. If you have hearing difficulties, you can book an interpreting service via the website. This costs you nothing. The conversation with the counsellors will be translated into German sign language. It can also be translated into written language. Counselling is possible in many languages via interpreters.

Violence against women helpline

[116016](tel:116016)

www.hilfetelefon.de

Further counselling and support options can be found under [Domestic violence](#).

Helpline for pregnant women in need

The helpline advises pregnant women in need. Pregnant women and their immediate environment can contact the counsellors before and after the birth. They are available around the clock. The counsellors will support you. They know suitable offers of help. They help regardless of gender, origin, faith and sexual identity. If necessary, they will also advise you on the possibility of a confidential birth.

Helpline for pregnant women in need

[0800/404002](tel:0800404002)

www.hilfetelefon-schwangere.de (multilingual)

The family guide

Family guide for people with disabilities

Aktion Mensch is publishing a family guide. The family guide is aimed at people with disabilities. And their families. It provides information and addresses. There is also a website. There you will find important information about living with a disability. You will also find local contacts. This information is available in simple and easy-to-understand German. It covers topics such as school, work, leisure, rights, housing, counselling and much more.

Family guide

[@info@aktion-mensch.de](mailto:info@aktion-mensch.de)

www.familienratgeber.de

breastcare app

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer worldwide. In Europe, one in eight women will develop breast cancer in the course of her life. In Germany alone, around 70,000 women

are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. The earlier the disease is recognised, the greater the chance of a cure. 25% of cases can be prevented by adopting a healthy lifestyle. The breastcare app is science-based. It explains everything you need to know about breast cancer and early detection in an easy-to-understand way. You learn how important a healthy lifestyle is. The app is currently available in seven languages: Arabic, German, English, Farsi, French, Spanish and Turkish.

The breastcare app

- reminds you to palpate your own breasts with a cycle calendar
- explains self-examination step by step with illustrated instructions
- explains risk factors and symptoms and provides specific tips for a healthy lifestyle
- answers questions about medical screening examinations in Germany
- links to numerous contact points such as breast centres, integration officers or support services that women can turn to with questions
- tells stories of affected women that are encouraging

You can download the app from the Apple and Google app stores. The app is free of charge. The app can be used without collecting personal data. It is free of advertising and designed for the long term. Further information in seven languages at: www.breastcare.app

Care support centre

The Lower Saxony Care Support Centre with Dementia Service Centre

The care support centre advises people who need help or care. The following people also receive advice: Relatives, carers and employees from the care sector.

Help is available here on these topics:

- outpatient, partial and full inpatient care services
- Provision of aids
- Offers to relieve the burden on family carers
- Dementia and prevention
- Benefits for care or severe disability
- Care insurance benefits and other social benefits

Counselling is free of charge. It is independent and personalised. Counselling takes place by telephone or on site. A home visit is also possible. The support centre offers consultation hours [in your area](#). Further information can be found on the [flyer](#).

Here are the contact details for the care support centre

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/442211](tel:05931/442211)

 pflegestuetzpunkt@emsland.de

 [Internetseite Pflegestützpunkt](#)

The Dementia Service Centre

Are you caring for someone with dementia? Or is one of your relatives suffering from dementia? You can get help and support at the Dementia Service Centre. You can find more information on the Dementia Service [Centre website](#). The dementia guide for the district of Emsland is also available there. It answers the most important questions about dementia. It also provides information on where you can find further help and support.

Here are the contact details for the Dementia Service Centre

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/441210](tel:05931/441210)

 pflugestuetzpunkt@emsland.de

 [Internetseite Demenz Servicezentrum](#)

