

Visiting a doctor

General practitioners (“family doctors”):

In Germany, everyone has a family doctor. If you are ill, you go to this doctor. You can choose your own doctor.

Your family doctor will give you a general check-up and is your first point of contact when you are ill. The doctor also decides what medication you need and whether you need to see a specialist.

Doctors' surgeries/practice centres are usually open from Monday to Friday. Each doctor always has different opening hours. It is better to **make an appointment with the doctor beforehand**.

If you need a special examination, your family doctor will send you to a specialist or to the hospital with a “referral”.

Consult your doctor when

- You are acutely ill or in pain
- You are chronically ill (for example with diabetes). If you have any medicine or your medicine packaging, bring it with you to the doctor. If you have already been to the doctor or hospital because of your illness, please bring the doctor's report.
- You are pregnant

Health care using asylum seekers' benefits:

Asylum seekers who are already in the process of applying for asylum receive health care through the asylum seeker benefit authority (Asylbewerberleistungsbehörde) ([»»Social Welfare Office](#)) in the District Administrative Office (Landratsamt). You will receive a medical treatment certificate there. Every family member gets their own medical treatment certificate. You need to get this certificate before visiting the doctor, and it means that going to the doctor is free for you.

You are entitled to

- Basic medical care for acute illness and pain
- Medical care during pregnancy
- Vaccinations
- Preventative check-ups

Once you have a [»»residence permit](#), you must register with a health insurance provider!

Healthcare from a health insurance provider:

Once you have a residence permit, you must register with a health insurance provider. You also have a right to health insurance with a health insurance provider if you have been in Germany for 15 months and have not yet received a positive asylum decision. You must choose your health insurance provider yourself. You will receive an insurance card from this health insurance provider. You need to bring this card with you to any doctor's appointments. If you are insured through the health insurance provider, you are entitled to the same benefits from any doctor as all other legally insured people.

The basic medical care of the health insurance provider includes:

- Services to prevent and alleviate diseases
- Services during pregnancy
- Services for the detection of diseases
- Services for the treatment of diseases

Paediatricians:

Children are usually examined by paediatricians. Regular check-ups and vaccinations by the paediatrician are important for the health of each child. These check-ups are called "U-Untersuchungen" and in some cases are mandatory.

Gynaecologists:

It is important that women are regularly examined by a gynaecologist. This helps detect illnesses early enough to treat them. This is called screening. You can also discuss contraception there.

Dentists:

If you have toothache, you go to the dentist.

If you need an appointment with the dentist, the asylum seeker benefits authority ([»»Social Welfare Office](#)) issues a dental treatment certificate – this is only possible for treating acute problems.

Specialists:

If necessary, your family doctor will refer you to a specialist who can carry out specific tests.

A referral to the specialist must be verified by the asylum seeker benefits authority ([»»Social Welfare Office](#)) before the appointment. You can go to the specialist doctor only after being approved.

Emergency medical services

Medical on-call service:

If you need a doctor at night or on weekends, but there is no emergency, you can call the free hotline for on-call medical services. If it is possible, you will be immediately connected with the nearest on-call service.

Medical on-call service: Tel. 116117

Asylum seekers can find further information in the brochure **Ratgeber Gesundheit für Asylsuchende in Deutschland** ("Healthcare advice for asylum applicants in Germany"). The brochure is available in the following languages [»»German](#)

[»»English](#)

[»»Arabic](#)

[»»Farsi](#)

[»»Kurdish](#)

- You can find more multilingual information on immigration and health [»»here](#)

ZANZU My body in word and pictures

[»»Zanzu](#) is a website on health.

It provides information in thirteen languages (for example, Arabic, English and Farsi) on the following topics: your body, family planning and pregnancy, infection, sexuality, relationships and feelings, your rights and the law.