

In Germany, if you are sick and need a doctor, you first go to a family doctor/general practitioner (Hausarzt/Allgemeinmediziner). The GP will examine you and give you treatment. Most sicknesses can be handled by a GP. Sometimes, in case of a special problem or sickness, he will refer you to a specialist. But the GP always has to be the first person you go to in case of sickness. In case your children get sick and you need help: you have to see a pediatrician (children's doctor).

There are two exceptions: If your teeth are painful, you go directly to a dentist. Also women with gynecological problems can go directly to a woman's doctor.

In case of emergency you will be treated in an emergency room at a hospital at any time.

In order to get treatment from a doctor you have to make an appointment, either by calling the doctor's office or walking into the office and ask for an appointment. In German you would say: "Guten Tag. Ich möchte bitte einen Termin ausmachen." (Hello, I would like to make an appointment). When you got your appointed day and time, you have to be at the appointment on time, better 5 minutes early. If you are late, it might be possible that the doctor cannot see you any more.

You should always see the same GP or children's doctor. If you change doctors this could cause a problem with the Landratsamt. And the doctors cannot help you well since they do not know you. It is best to stay with the same doctor in order to have someone who knows you and your health situation. Of course, you can change doctors if you move to another place. In this case ask your old doctor to give you all your health information documents for the new doctor. Thus, no important information will get lost.

Almost every GP and children's doctors are available from Monday to Friday from 08-12 h. Most GPs are available on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, too. The times may differ. The doctor's office is usually closed on Wednesday and Friday afternoons and on weekends.

Please check the opening hours of your doctor.

If you see a doctor, please always bring your ID. If you have health insurance, please also bring your health insurance card as well as your vaccination card and the yellow booklet for children.

Summary:

- First see GP/family doctor or children's doctor
- Stay with the same doctor
- Always make an appointment and be there ON TIME
- Bring your: ID, health insurance card, vaccination card, yellow booklet for children

Always try to organise a translator!!!!