

What to do in a hospital?

How to seek medical treatment and behave in a hospital

If you have some medical problems, which are not of emergency character, it would be better to consult first the general practitioner you have chosen.



An image of an ambulance in Bulgaria, [source](#)

The doctor may decide the treatment or may decide to send you to a specialist (neurologist, dermatologist, surgeon, etc.).

If you cannot contact your personal doctor you may decide to visit a hospital directly.

Usually hospitals have a registry desk, where staff can decide if your case is urgent to be treated or not.

Before visiting a hospital you will need to have your identity documents and documents, certifying your health insurance status.

It is advisable you visit a hospital with a family member or a friend. At the hospital registry desk you will know where to go for an examination - if the case is not urgent you can have an appointment for a visit to specialist. You have to know that the visit to the specialist will require a specific document issued from your personal general practitioner, which will allow you to visit this specialist without additional payment (this document in Bulgarian is called "направление" (napravlenie or directing document)). It is called like that because it "directs" you for a specific examination which is not in the competence of the general

practitioner. If you go to the specialist (surgeon, neurologist, etc.) without this document you will have to pay for the examination and medical treatment. If the case is urgent and you have a health insurance the medical treatment is for free (you pay only a minor tax for the treatment and hospital bed). In case of emergency when you are not health insured you will have to pay the medical treatment. The official language of service in the hospitals in the country is Bulgarian and they are not obliged to provide you with services in any other language [1].

If you have to stay for a hospital treatment you will be asked to have some items of personal character with you (underwear, items of personal hygiene, etc.). That is why it is good to have a close person with you when you visit a medical institution - he/she can bring these items for you at a later stage, while you are being taking care of from the medical personnel.

The medical institution may also require for you to provide any documents about previous medical treatments you had or medications you have been taking.

[1] [A web-site with a list of interpreters/translators from various languages.](#)