

Walk-in Clinics? NOT THE BEST MEDICAL CARE FOR YOU!
Dr. Dec - Does not like his patients going to Walk-In Clinics.

We have noticed there have been occasions where you have sought medical care in a clinic or practice other than ours. I know that walk-in clinics can be quick, convenient, open late with often a minimal wait. So why am I not in favour of that? This office certainly tries to accommodate all of our patients' medical needs in a timely manner. While I understand that at times I may be unavailable to accommodate you urgently, such as when I am away on vacation, I do have members of my call group on hand to see my patients in that instance. For the past year, we have started an "Advanced Access" appointment scheduling system, which usually ensures a same-day or next day appointment. Since 2012, our group does have a formal evening emergency after hours clinic from 5-8 on most nights and 8-11 on Saturdays. To access that service, ask the office staff or check my website for details.

Dr. Dec signs you up as his patient, so that he can look after every part of your care. We do this by keeping your complete medical record, knowing all of your medications and allergies and updating things when you go see a specialist. You may recall that you completed a form awhile back that tells the Ministry of Health (MOH) that you are signed up or "rostered" as my patient. With this, I am expected to provide all of your primary medical care, and for that I receive a monthly fee. The system institutes a financial penalty when you do go to a walk-in clinic. The advantage for you by rostering, is that you gain easier access to other services such as telephone advice, prescription renewals, Family Health Team programs and overall better continuity of care for you. Walk-in clinics don't have all the important information to care for you properly and that can be dangerous. Despite what they tell you, we NEVER routinely get reports/information from Walk-in Clinics.

Certainly, there may be times that you do need to seek urgent medical attention, despite the above, when we are just not available. In that case, I would prefer that you use the Emergency Department. In this way, I do receive records of ER visits, so that I will know what is happening with your medical care, as your primary care provider.

So, to summarize, what have we done to offer you timely, accessible service and care?

1. Problem during the week? Call our staff & we aim to get you seen same day/next day
 - a. Advanced Access Booking - Lots of same-day/next-day appointments
 - b. Call Group Coverage when Dr. Dec is away – {access to your medical charts!}
2. Urgent problem, late in day/evening? Usually an After-Hours Clinic: Mon-Thurs from 5-8!
 - a. Call our number and get an after hours appointment
3. Problem late in the evening or on weekend? Call Telephone Health Advisory Service THAS @ 1-866-553-7205 for instructions! Talk to a nurse after hours – any time!
4. Really sick or hurt? Proceed straight to the Emergency Department!

Given this, *there should be no reason you would even need a walk-in clinic.*

For patients who repeatedly choose to bypass the above and still get care at walk-in clinics? Then we need to decide if our care model is right for you, and whether you wish to get most of your care from Walk-in Clinics. If it is your preference to choose to routinely seek your medical care elsewhere, you will need to inform us of that. In that case, we will take you off our regular list, "deroster" you in a sense. In this way, you will become a "Fee-for-Service" patient, and we can see you periodically if the need arises.

If this is not the case, and you do wish to still continue to be enrolled in my practice, then you should call for an appointment as needed, as described above. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office, and discuss this matter with either Samantha or Rachel.

Thank you