

Making the Most of the Ambulance Service

~ When do we need an ambulance? ~



<Purpose of this document>

In recent years, we have seen an increase in both the number of times ambulances get called out, and the number of people being transported by ambulance, and it is also taking longer for emergency crews to reach their destinations. The fact is that around half the people transported by ambulance do not in fact need to be hospitalized.

For this reason, we have created this document entitled “Making the Most of the Ambulance Service – When do we Need an Ambulance?” The document contains information such as “Points to communicate when calling an ambulance”, “Conditions under which you should call an ambulance without delay” (since the patient may have a serious illness), “How to call an ambulance” (instructions for when you actually have to do so) and other points, in order to help you decide whether a situation requires an ambulance or not in a confusing situation.

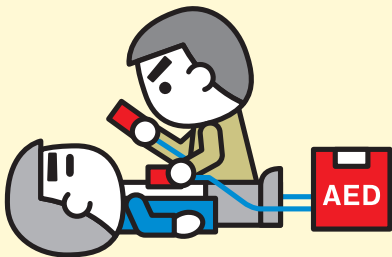
Ambulances and emergency medical treatment are limited resources. If we use them carefully, we will be able to build a society in which everyone has access to emergency medicine as and when they need it.

Points to communicate when calling an ambulance

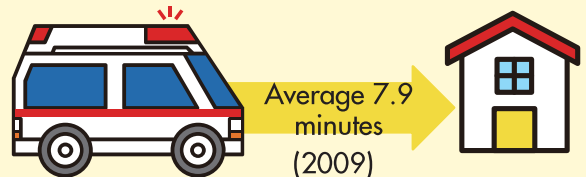
Dial **119** to call an ambulance

Emergency treatment is important in order to save lives. If emergency treatment is required, the fire department headquarters will instruct you over the telephone how to implement it.

It always takes some time for the ambulance to arrive. Please learn the **correct way to implement these emergency treatment measures**. They may save the life of a loved one.



Your local fire department **offers classes in practicing emergency treatment measures**. You can find the phone number on your town/city hall website.



If there are other helpers available, send them out to **the place where the ambulance is due to arrive**. This will help the crew reach you more quickly.

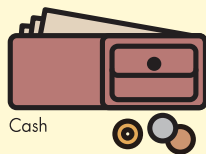


It is helpful if you can **prepare the following things** when calling an ambulance

- Passport
- Health insurance card/
patient registration card
- Cash
- Shoes
- Current medication
and schedule



Shoes



Cash



Current medication
and schedule

(For young children)

- Maternal/child health record
- Paper diapers
- Drinking bottle
- Towel



Maternal/
child health
record



Paper diapers



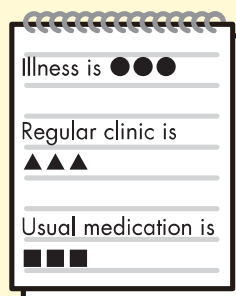
Drinking
bottle



Towel

When the ambulance arrives, **communicate the following information**:

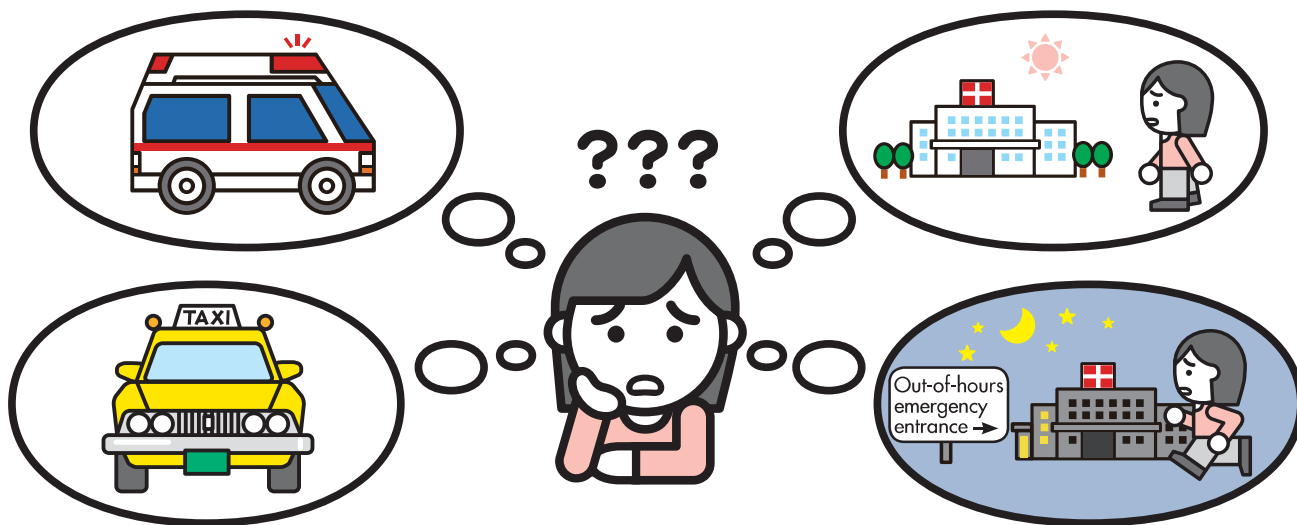
- The conditions under which the accident or illness occurred
- Any changes before the ambulance arrived
- Any emergency measures engaged in
- Information about the person who is sick or injured (name of illness, regular clinic, usual medicine, doctor's instruction, etc.).



- * It is useful to keep a note of clinics visited or regular medicine to hand

If you are unsure, contact your nearest emergency advice center

If you become ill or injured suddenly, you may be unsure whether to call an ambulance, or go to hospital yourself. You may also be unsure which hospital would be most suitable.

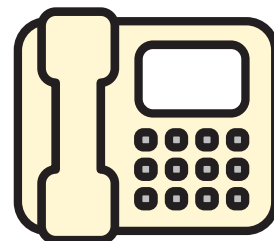


Your local prefectural, city, town or village emergency advice center is there for just this kind of situation. Please feel free to contact them.

For example, the following telephone advice lines are available

(as of March 2011).

- ☎ **#7119** Emergency Advice Center (Tokyo)
Emergency Peace of Mind Center (Osaka, Nara Prefectures)
- ☎ **#8000** Emergency Medical Telephone Advice for Children
(Available in all prefectures)



 **MEMO**

Situations in which you should call an ambulance without hesitation (Adult)

If you experience **any of these symptoms**, please call 119 without hesitation.
They may indicate a **serious illness or injury**.

Face

- Half your face is difficult to move, or has pins and needles
- Your mouth or face is twisted when you smile
- You cannot speak properly
- Your sight is impaired
- You suddenly have double vision
- Your face is a strange color



Head

- Sudden, strong headache
- Sudden high fever
- You feel so unstable that you cannot stand without support

Chest and back

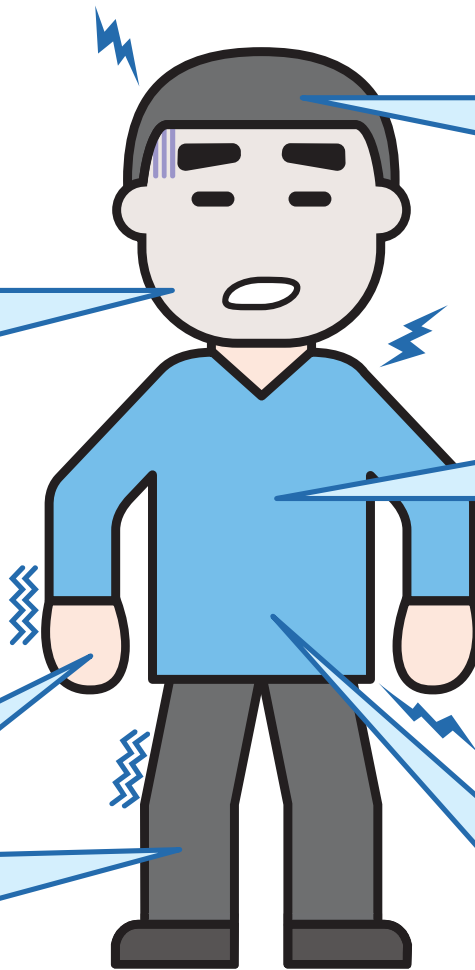
- Sudden sharp pain
- Sudden loss of breath or difficulty breathing
- A sense of tightness or pressure in the chest, lasting 2 or 3 minutes
- Pain moving around your body

Hands and Feet

- Sudden pins and needles
- Sudden loss of strength in one leg or arm

Stomach

- Sudden sharp pain
- Continual strong pain
- Vomiting or excreting blood



Problems with consciousness

- Unconscious (no response) or incomplete consciousness (confused or vague)
- Sense of exhaustion



Spasm

- Continuous spasm
- Spasm ends, but consciousness does not return

Injury/burn

- Injury that includes significant blood loss
- Burns across a wide area



Nausea

- Strong nausea accompanied by cold sweats

Swallowing

- Food stuck in throat, difficulty breathing
- Patient has swallowed an object and is unconscious



Accident

- Have been in a traffic accident (strong impact)
- Have been submerged in water
- Have fallen from a height

○ **Any other situation in which the patient's condition is altered or unusual.**

Situations in which you should call an ambulance without hesitation (Child up to the age of 15)

If you experience **any of these symptoms**, please call **119** without hesitation.
They may indicate a **serious illness or injury**.

Face

- Lips purple, breathing shallow



Chest

- Sharp coughing, wheezing, breathing difficulties, facial color poor

Legs/arms

- Legs or arms rigid



Head

- Head hurts, spasm occurs
- Has hit head, accompanied by continuous blood loss, loss of consciousness or fitting

Stomach

- Strong diarrhea or nausea, not eating or drinking, consciousness impaired
- Suffering from strong stomach pain with repeated nausea
- Blood in feces

Problems with consciousness

- Unconscious (no response) or incomplete consciousness (confused or vague)



Rash

- Bitten by an insect, body covered in rash and facial color poor

Spasm

- Continuous spasm
- Spasm ends, but consciousness does not return

Burns

- Severely painful burn
- Burns over a wide area

Swallowing

- Child has swallowed an object and is unconscious

Accident

- Have been in a traffic accident (strong impact)
- Have been submerged in water
- Have fallen from a height

Children under 3 months old

- Any situation in which child's state is altered.



○ Any other situation in which child's state is unusual or altered.

Emergency medical inspection

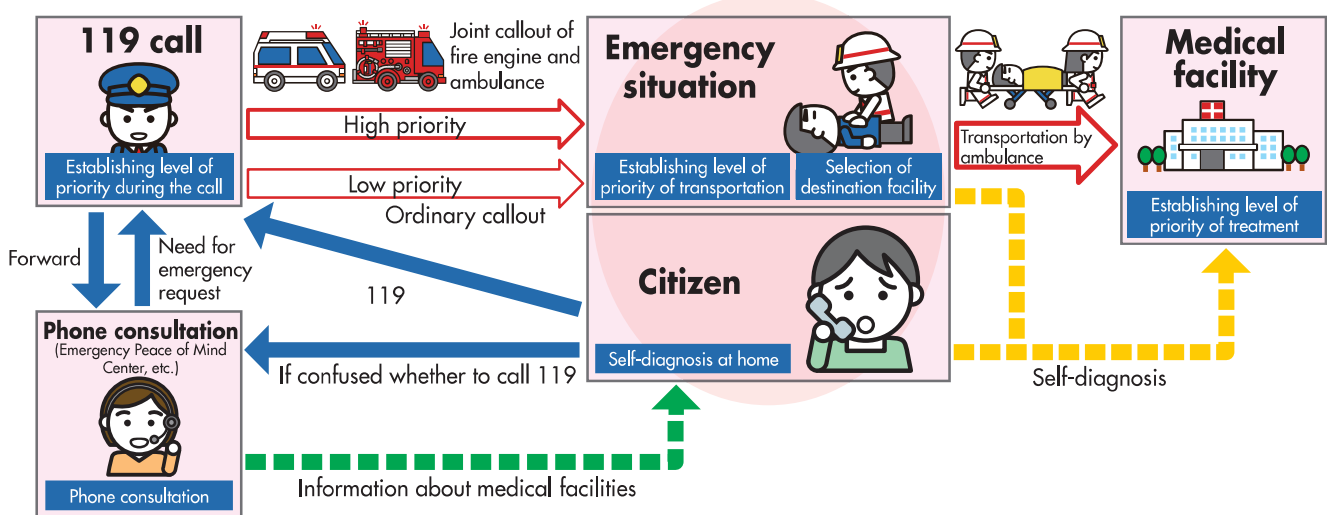
Even if the symptoms are not urgent, some people call an ambulance simply because they have no transport, they do not know which hospital to go to, it is more convenient, or because they feel they are in trouble. Sometimes people visit an out-of-hours emergency clinic at night or on a holiday because they cannot take time off during the week, they are busy during the day, or they have to go to work the next day.

Ambulances and emergency medical staff are a limited resource. Please think about whether you really need an emergency consultation, in order to ensure that the service is available to those who do.

Ambulances have been called in these situations ~ Do you really need an ambulance? ~

- An itchy insect bite
- Sunburn after sea bathing, making the skin burn
- A paper cut on the finger, which has stopped bleeding...
- The medicine the patient received at hospital has run out
- Scheduled to go into hospital today, so wanted a lift...
- Had called a home helper who did not come, so called an ambulance...
- Didn't want to wait long at hospital, so called an ambulance

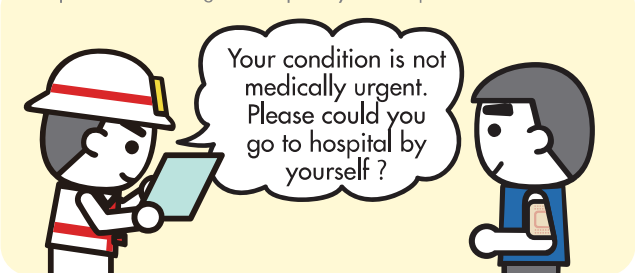
It is important to ensure that emergency medics can be dispatched to emergency cases in order to save lives.



Example of phone consultation



Example of establishing level of priority of transportation



Example of establishing level of priority during call

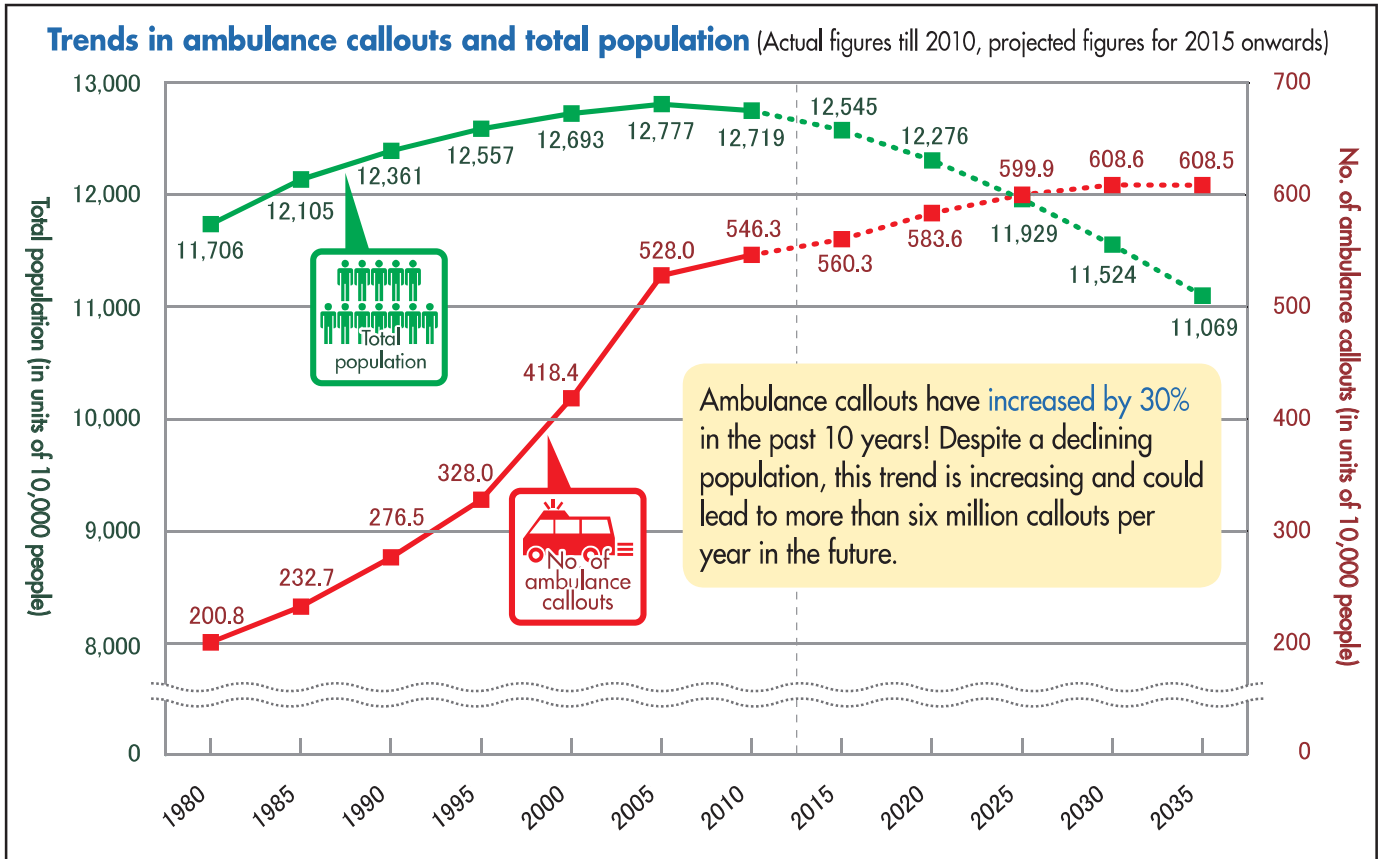


Example of establishing level of priority of treatment



The Fire and Disaster Management Agency uses these common **criteria for deciding on levels of priority** in order to create an efficient emergency response system.

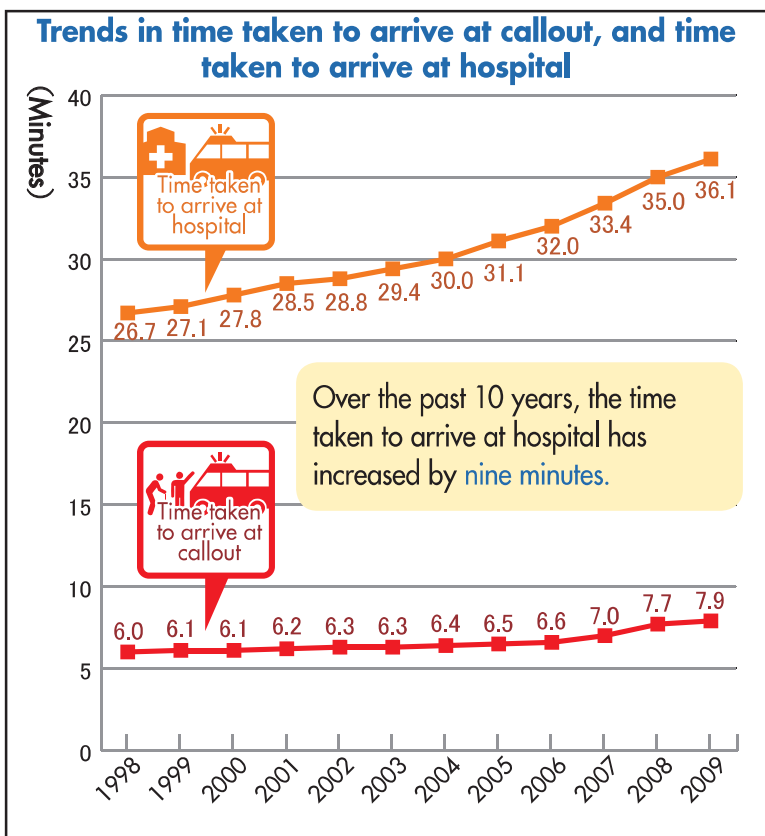
Reference: Current and future projections of ambulance callout



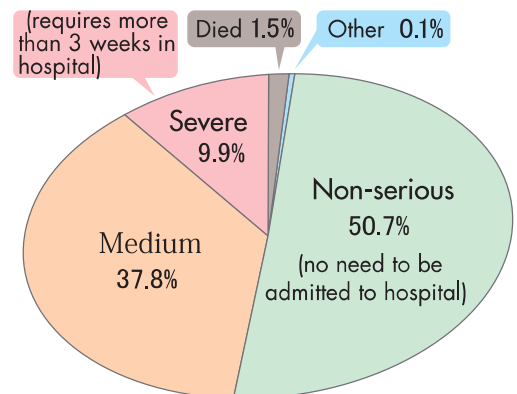
* No. of callouts for 2010 based on immediate report values

* Projected population based on median projections in "Future population projections for Japanese cities, towns and villages" (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)

* Callouts for 2015 onwards are based on rates of transportation (rate of use of ambulance) from national ambulance callout data for 2007-2009 and population projections. They do not take into account future changes in rates of transportation or changes in social conditions.



Comparison of levels of sickness/injury of patients taken to hospital by ambulance (2009)

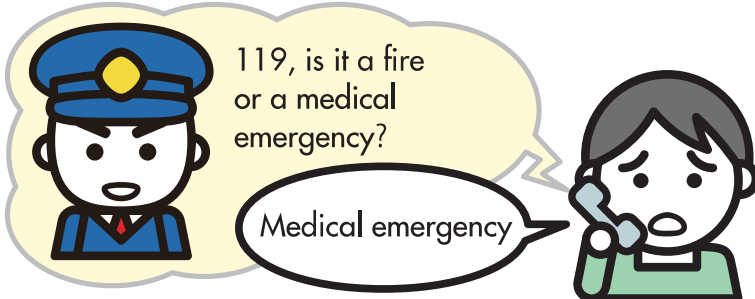


Around half the people who are transported to hospital by ambulance have a non-serious illness or injury and do not need to be admitted! Some of these people may never have needed to use an ambulance in the first place.

How to call an ambulance

On receiving a 119 call, emergency call center staff will ask certain questions to establish the need for an ambulance callout. If the situation is high-priority, the ambulance will be dispatched before all these questions have been asked.

Please speak slowly and do not panic.



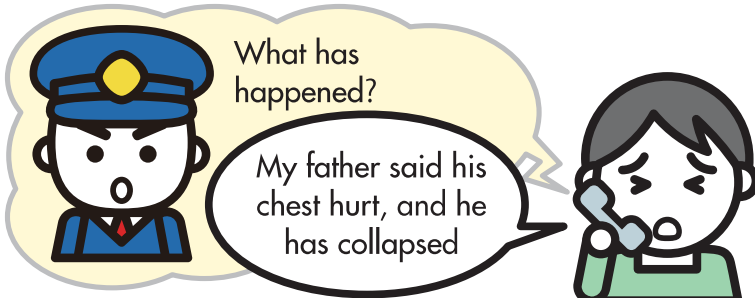
1 Communicate the fact that it is a **medical emergency**.

If you call 119, the first thing you say should be "medical emergency".



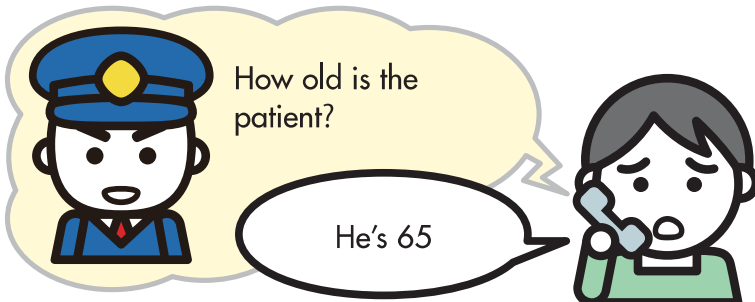
2 Give the address you want an ambulance to come to.

Please give the name of the city/town/village first. If you do not know the address, describe a nearby building or intersection.



3 Communicate the symptoms of the patient.

Firstly, state who has experienced what symptoms, and how they are now, clearly and simply. State what you know about their consciousness and breathing.



4 Communicate the age of the patient

State the patient's age. If you do not know it, give an approximation ("in his 60s")



5 Give your name and contact details

Give your name, and a phone number you can be reached on after the 119 call ends.

The crew may contact you if they cannot find your location.

- In addition to this, call center staff may ask for more details, information about current illness and regular clinics, etc. Please give whatever information you can.

- The examples given above are the general flow of a conversation in a situation of this type.