

Health and Care

In Québec, health and social services are the responsibility of the Government of Québec. Therefore, they are public, free and offered to all, without discrimination.

From age 14, a person may receive health care without parental supervision.

Health Insurance Card

The Health Insurance Card is free and gives you free access to health-care services, such as:

- Medical care (covered by the public health insurance plan);
- Basic hospital services;
- Some dental treatments (for children under age 10); and
- Some eye treatments (for people over 18 or 65 and older).



MRC de
L'Islet

Health Care and Hospitalization

When arriving in Québec,

get a private medical insurance (by yourself or through your employer). Then, as soon as you receive your official Medical Insurance Card, you can reevaluate the necessity of keeping your private medical insurance or not.

Request your card as soon as possible

After arriving in Québec, you will have to wait three months before being covered by health insurance. However, there are exceptions, as for pregnant women (21-day delay).

In order to avoid delaying your access to free medical services any longer, ask for your Medical Insurance Card upon your arrival.

Steps:

- Call to request a registration form. You will need to provide the following information: your address, phone number, social insurance number and your work permit expiry dates. You will receive your registration form within 10 business days.
- Get your picture taken for your Medical Insurance Card, at the drugstore or at one of the SAAQ's service points (average cost: \$13).
- Go to a CLSC with the following documents in hand (within 45 days after your registration form request):
 - + Official picture
 - + Employment confirmation letter or a copy of your lease
 - + Passport
 - + Work permit (original copy)

You must call or go directly to the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec's office. (Registration cannot be completed online.)

Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)
787, boulevard Lebourgneuf
Québec (Québec) G2J 1C3
1 800 561-9749

Information:

www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca



Prescription Drug Insurance

In Québec, everyone must have a prescription drug insurance: public or private. When you purchase prescription drugs, the insurance covers part of the cost.

Unless you are covered by a private insurance plan (through your employer, for example), you must register with the public prescription drug insurance plan administered by the RAMQ. Your children will automatically be covered.

Register for the prescription drug insurance plan at the same time as your Medical Insurance Card.

Where to find treatment

In Québec, the decision to consult with a doctor in a medical clinic or a hospital depends on the severity of your medical situation. If you need immediate medical attention, go to the nearest emergency room. If your situation does not require immediate attention from a doctor, go to a medical clinic.

CLSC (Centres locaux de services communautaires)

CLSC are public institutions which offer health-care services (walk-in medical consultations, nursing care, blood samples, etc.) as well as prenatal classes, newborn health care, infant vaccination, home care for seniors or people with disabilities, etc.

There is one CLSC in Saint-Jean-Port-Joli and another located in Saint-Pamphile. In addition to doctors and nurses, there you can consult psychologists, social workers, nutritionists, physiotherapists, etc.

CLSC de Saint-Jean-Port-Joli

430, rue Jean-Leclerc, Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, Québec G0R 3G0
418 598-3355

CLSC de Saint-Pamphile

103, rue du Foyer Nord, Saint-Pamphile, Québec G0R 3X0
418 356-3393



Info-Santé (811)

Info-Santé 811 is a free and confidential phone consultation service, available day and night, year-round.

Info-Santé's nurses give advice and can answer health-related questions. They also can, if needed, refer you to the appropriate resource in the health care system.

First, the nurse will listen to you and ask questions about your situation. She is in fact gathering the required information to properly assess your needs and clarify your demand. The nurse will then evaluate the situation and determine the immediate problems, the situation's degree of emergency and the adequate intervention in your case.

Calling Info-Santé 811 often prevents unnecessary visits to the clinic or emergency room. However, in case of a serious problem or an emergency, it is important to call 911 or go to an emergency room.

Walk-in Clinics

If you need to consult a doctor in a near future, and that your health issue is not urgent, you may be able to see a doctor in a walk-in clinic. The waiting time depends of the number of people seeking medical attention on that day. The conditions to access a consultation differ depending on the clinic, but it is often preferable to call early in the morning or show up as soon as the clinic opens.



Hospitals

Hospitals in Québec offer emergency services day and night, year-round, as well as specialized care.

The region's hospitals are located in Montmagny and La Pocatière. Both have emergency departments. This is where you go if your condition is serious and requires immediate medical attention.

Once at the emergency, go straight to the reception desk. An employee will create a file for you, and a nurse will assess your case's severity. Waiting times depends on the number of patients and the gravity of their condition. For minor or non-urgent problems, the other medical consultation options are usually faster.

Family Doctors

Family doctors (also called physicians or generalists) treat a certain number of patients under their care. Patients come to them for a variety of affections. Usually, family doctors work in medical clinics or CLSCs.

To be assigned one, you must register:

- Online, by adding your name to the waiting list – guichet d'accès à un médecin de famille (GAMF); or
- By phone, dial 418 248-0630 ext. 5146 – guichet d'accès pour la clientèle orpheline (GACO):

You can also find a doctor by yourself by contacting medical clinics or family doctor groups to ask if they accept new patients.

Finding a family doctor may take time. A lot of people in Québec do not have access to one yet.

Your health record is confidential.

This means that except for the professionals who treat you, no one can consult your record without obtaining your consent first.

Québec Poison Control Centre



In case of poisoning or intoxication, contact the Québec Poison Control Centre: 1 800 463-5060.

This free hotline is available at all times. A nurse will ask you some questions to evaluate the situation's degree of urgency and will then tell you what you need to do.

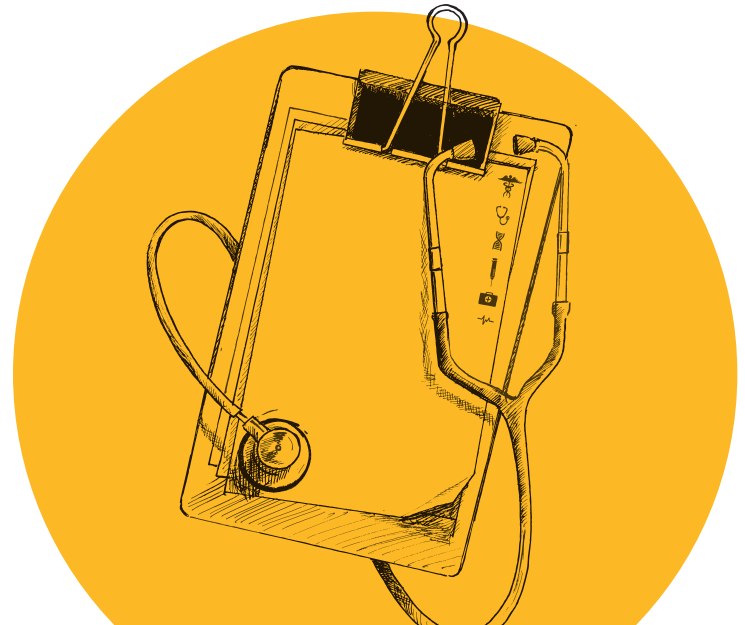
Here are some examples of when you should call the Poison Control Centre:

- Your child swallowed a cleaning product.
- You have made a dosage mistake with your medication.
- There is a chemical product on your skin or in your eyes.
- You are experiencing discomfort after having inhaled a chemical product.

If the situation is severe, call 911 immediately.



If you need immediate medical attention and cannot move, call the emergency medical service (dial 911) to get the help of an ambulance (applicable fees).



Other health professionals

Pharmacists

Pharmacists are drug specialists. If your doctor gives you a prescription, you must take it to the pharmacy. A pharmacist will then give you the prescribed drug with explanations on how to take it safely.

Readily available, pharmacists are medical professionals you can consult without having to book an appointment or add your name to a waiting list. They can give you advice on several health issues such as colds, the flu, seasonal allergies, asthma, muscle aches, etc.

There are many pharmacies in Québec. In addition to selling medication, most pharmacies sell beauty, personal care and cleaning products, some food, baby products, offer picture printing services, etc.

It is always best to buy your prescription drugs at a single location. This allows your pharmacist to have a full portrait of your medication and better advise you to ensure there are no adverse interactions.

Optometrists and Opticians

Optometrists are eye-health specialists. They conduct eye exams which determine if you need eyeglasses or special care. Opticians make and sell eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Some services are free for minors and seniors (65 years and older).

Additional care must be paid for. Several private insurance plans (provided by employers) cover the costs of eye exams and eyeglasses.

A community eyewear maker comes to the region once a month to offer low-cost eyeglasses.

Information:

Le Marchand de lunettes, Community Eyewear Shop
www.marchandelunettes.org



Dentists

Dentists see to people's dental health. Children under 10 can benefit from several free dental care services. Thereafter, you must pay. Many private insurance plans (provided by employers) cover dental care costs. In general, it is recommended to have one dental exam per year.

If you need urgent dental care and your family income is low, you can contact the Ordre des dentistes' Bouche B Project via the following website : www.projetboucheb.ca

Psychologists

Psychologists take care of people's psychological health. They can help you bounce back from adversity, grief, adapt to a new living environment, manage stress, resolve conflicts, etc.

Their services are not free. However, several private insurance plans (provided by employers) cover psychological care (partly or fully).

There are also psychologists in schools to help children who need help, as well as at CLSCs for people of all ages. Both their services are free.

Urgent Psychological Help

- Emergency: 1 866 APPELLE (1 866 277-3553)



Vaccination



Please keep your child's immunization record from birth on. In fact, vaccination is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your children from serious illnesses. In Québec, several vaccines are free. To find out how to proceed and where to get vaccinated, call Info-Santé 811. Parents must give their prior consent before a child under 14 can be vaccinated. Vaccination is not mandatory.

Pregnancy

Three weeks after arriving in the country, pregnant women can benefit from the Régie de l'assurance maladie's coverage.

Pregnancy tests sold in pharmacies are used to detect pregnancy. Women must then consult with a doctor, who will confirm their pregnancy and calculate the delivery due date.

Pregnant women are accompanied by a doctor or a midwife. Several exams are scheduled during the pregnancy to ensure that everything is normal.

Women can give birth at the hospital or in birthing centres. The mother and infant stay there for a short while, and if everything is going well, they can return home.

Prenatal Classes

Many organizations offer prenatal classes to future parents. These classes help parents prepare for the various stages of pregnancy, delivery and the first weeks with a newborn.

For more information, call: Info-Santé 811.

In Québec, the Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) pays benefits to all admissible workers so they can take maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave or adoption leave. The QPIP is an income replacement plan. To be admissible to benefits, the applicants must have earned an income.

www.rqap.gouv.qc.ca

Information:

SOS Grossesse
www.sosgrossesse.ca
1 877 662-9666

For more information on Québec's health system, consult:

The provincial government's Portail santé mieux-être
www.sante.gouv.qc.ca

