

# Healthcare in Estonia 2023



# Useful tips & contacts:

- In case of emergency, call ☎ **112!**
  - Emergency care and ambulance are provided to **all the people on the territory of Estonia free of charge**, including foreign nationals and people without health insurance.
  - Every Estonian citizen, every person residing in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit or right of residence, and every foreigner who is temporarily insured in Estonia **can register in the list of a family doctor** (also known as general practitioner) and change their family doctor on the basis of a written application.
  - If you have health concern which does not require emergency care, **always contact your family doctor.**
  - If you have a health concern but your family doctor is not available, calling the family doctor counselling line ☎ **1220** can be helpful\*. When calling from abroad, dial ☎ **+372 634 6630**. In English, the phone is open every day at 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. More information about the counselling line can be found on 🌐 **1220.ee**
  - Turn to the Estonian Health Insurance Fund if you have questions e.g. about choosing or changing your family doctor, the availability of medical care, Estonian national health insurance: ☎ **+372 669 6630** or ✉ **info@tervisekassa.ee**
  - Information about **healthcare services for refugees from Ukraine** can also be found on Estonian Health Insurance Fund website **www.tervisekassa.ee**
  - Turn to **national midwife helpline** ☎ **12252** if you have a question/concern about your pregnancy or about your baby's health.\*\*
  - In most cases, **family doctor's referral is also required to access the specialist doctor.** Family doctor's referral is not needed for contacting psychiatrist, gynaecologist, dermatologist, dentist, ophthalmologist or if you have a major trauma.
  - If you cannot make it to a doctor's appointment, always cancel it!
  - All the people staying in Estonia with a temporary residence permit **must have a valid health insurance** during their stay. If the Estonian national health insurance does not apply to you (see chapter 7), you need to buy it yourself from a private insurance company.
- \*When calling ☎ 1220, the caller will pay for the call from the first minute according to the price lists of telephone operators (approximately 0.30 €/min).*
- \*\* When calling ☎ 12252, the caller will pay for the call 1.20 €/min.*



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## 1

# COVID-19 Coronavirus & Vaccination in 2023

To slow the spread of the disease, it is most important for everyone to avoid contact with infected persons and other people, follow regular hygiene rules, and anyone who becomes ill must stay at home until they are well. In case of illness, you must contact your family doctor, family doctor helpline. If your condition rapidly deteriorates – if you experience shortages of breath or breathing difficulties, call the emergency line ☎ **112**.

Everyone who lives in Estonia and is at least 5 years old can get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccination is also free-of-charge for foreigners who live in or visit Estonia. Getting vaccinated is especially important for people in the risk group of COVID-19 – because of their age or other illnesses.

Information about COVID-19 vaccination points, vaccine types, certificates and documents proving your vaccination is available on website: [www.vaktsineeri.ee/en/](http://www.vaktsineeri.ee/en/) There you can also find information about other vaccinations and immunization plans in Estonia.

You can find information on acts, laws, and imposed restrictions adopted in Estonia (incl. travel) during and after the COVID-19 pandemic can be found on the website [www.kriis.ee/en](http://www.kriis.ee/en)

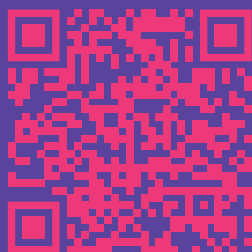
Description and infection statistics of the COVID-19 virus, health guidelines for general public and medical personnel can be found on the website of Estonian Health Board [www.terviseamet.ee/en/covid19](http://www.terviseamet.ee/en/covid19).

**All people** who live in Estonia and are at least 5 years old can get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccination is also **free-of-charge** for foreigners who live in or visit Estonia.

State helpline, short number ☎ **1247**, is an information number operating next to the emergency number ☎ **112**, which offers information and advice in Estonian, Russian and English 24 hours a day in situations where life, health and property are not endangered. The hotline is available 24/7 and it is free of charge for the callers. When calling from abroad, dial ☎ **+372 600 1247**. You can also find more information on their website [www.1247.ee](http://www.1247.ee).

Free-of-charge PCR testing is available for the elderly and other coronavirus risk groups. Your family doctor will refer you to free testing if you have symptoms of an upper respiratory virus and you are older than 60 or belong to a risk group due to your medical condition (e.g. Parkinson's disease, a stroke within the past year, diabetes, chronic bronchitis, asthma, obesity, sleep apnea etc.). The complete list of specific diseases with which you can get a referral to free COVID-19 testing can be found on the web page of the Health Board: [www.terviseamet.ee/en/testing-virus](http://www.terviseamet.ee/en/testing-virus).

If you are not in a risk group due to your age or health condition, you should do a rapid test if there is reason to suspect the coronavirus. If you wish to record the positive result in the health information system, contact your family doctor or a private healthcare service provider.



Testing for COVID-19 incl. antibodies without a family doctor's referral has been made available as an out-of-pocket payment through private health service providers, such as:

**Synlab**

[minu.synlab.ee/en](http://minu.synlab.ee/en)

**Qvalitas**

[qvalitas.ee/?lang=en](http://qvalitas.ee/?lang=en)

**Confido**

[confido.ee/en/](http://confido.ee/en/)

# Roadmap on health problems

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\*Acute health concerns: critical or life threatening conditions, such as severe injury, trauma, bleeding, trouble breathing, severe cold/fever/poisoning, psychiatric disorders where the patient is a threat to himself or herself or those around him or her.

\* If in doubt where to turn, find out more: [www.alustaperearstist.ee/en/perearstemo/](http://www.alustaperearstist.ee/en/perearstemo/)

\* No referral is needed to turn to a venereologist, psychiatrist, gynaecologist, dermatologist, dentist, ophthalmologist, or in case you have a major trauma.

\*Minor health concerns: sore throat, high fever, diarrhoea, skin infections, mild psychiatric and mood disorders.



# 3

## Estonian Healthcare System & Related Institutions:

### Tervisekassa

#### Estonian Health Insurance Fund (EHIF)

National health insurance, waiting times, co-payments and medical benefits, such as sick leaves. Choosing and changing your family doctor.

Tallinn, Lastekodu str 48  
+372 669 6630  
info@tervisekassa.ee  
tervisekassa.ee/en

### Terviseamet

#### Estonian Health Board

Oversight of health care professionals, legal supervision of healthcare services, communicable disease control, chemical and product safety, medical devices.

Tallinn, Paldiski str 81  
+372 794 3500  
info@terviseamet.ee  
terviseamet.ee/en

### Sotsiaalkindustusamet

#### Social Insurance Board

State assigned pensions, aids, and benefits, identification of severity of disability and permanent incapacity for work for children and pensioners (retired), victim support and conciliation services.

Tallinn, Endla str 8  
+372 612 1360  
info@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee  
sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en

### Töötukassa

#### Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

Unemployment insurance and temporary subsidies, identification of work capability for working age adults, career advice and search programmes for everyone.

Tallinn, Lasnamäe str 2  
+372 6696513  
info@tootukassa.ee  
tootukassa.ee/en

### Maksu- ja Tolliamet

#### Estonian Tax and Customs Board

Tax rates and forms, international taxation, customs, registration of business and employment.

Tallinn, Lõotsa str 8a  
+372 880 0811  
emta@emta.ee  
emta.ee/eng

# 4

## Introduction to Estonian Healthcare System

As a general rule, the first contact with the medical system should be your family doctor, who together with a family nurse provide primary care.

Please note, that in Estonia, all health care providers are independent entities operating under private law. Family doctors operate as private entrepreneurs or salaried employees of private companies owned by family doctors or local municipalities. Most hospitals are either limited liability companies owned by local governments or foundations established by the state, municipalities or other public agencies. The remaining few are privately owned.

Please also note, that being able to speak English or Russian is not a requirement for doctors to practice in Estonia, so you should not assume that a family doctor and/or other medical staff are able to communicate with you in languages other than Estonian. However, it is possible if the doctor and patient mutually agree to it. You can also visit clinics and doctors with an interpreter or a support person.

Your positive and constructive feedback about provided healthcare service quality or other nuances is valued and you can submit it to healthcare service provider directly, usually through their website or general e-mail.

Estonian medical care is divided into three levels:

- 1
primary care
- 2
specialised medical care
- 3
nursing care

Family doctors together with nurses make up the primary care team, which offers health services and counselling to all residents regardless of their age, health condition, or occupation. For example, the primary care team can monitor a child's development progress, provide guidance to persons living with chronic conditions, perform minor surgical procedures, administer vaccinations, bind wounds, remove stitches, make home visits, give advice on care of injuries and intoxications, open sick leaves and provide addiction counselling. Independent appointments with a family nurse are also possible to receive advice and guidance in promoting and maintaining health and preventing or monitoring (chronic) diseases — generally it's the family nurse who provides first assistance in the event of illness. If necessary, the family nurse consults the family physician or directs the patient to visit the family physician.

Family doctors can also issue medical certificates for working in specific vocations (e.g. food handling and teachers) and driver's licenses. Family doctors can also consult (e-consultation) with specialist doctors and provide referrals to the next level of care.

Family doctors are assigned to patient directories (lists), which have designated service areas generally at either city, town or local municipality level. The maximum amount of patients in a list is 2000 people (or 2400, if working together with an assistant doctor). Family doctors can also work in a group practice.

Adults and children relocating to Estonia from other countries are not automatically assigned to a family doctor's list and have to submit a signed application to their chosen family doctor. Newborns are automatically registered with their mother's family doctor, if available.

Family doctors can, but are not required by law to accept new patients if their list is full or if the applicant is not registered resident in the doctor's service area. After submitting the application, the applicant has to be informed of the doctor's decision within 7 work days.

More information about finding and applying to your local family doctor and related application forms can be found on the website of Estonian Health Insurance Fund: [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/primary-health-care](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/primary-health-care) or by e-mail: [info@tervisekassa.ee](mailto:info@tervisekassa.ee) & phone: ☎ +372 634 6630.

You can also contact the International House of Estonia, which organizes several informational events, incl those which give an overview of the Estonian Healthcare system for internationals living in Estonia. The events are organized in cooperation with the Estonian Health Board and other partners and are free of charge. You can check the event calendar for this and other important topics at [www.workinestonia.com/internationalhouse](http://www.workinestonia.com/internationalhouse)

# 5

## Specialised Medical & Nursing Care

**No referral is needed to turn to:**  
dentist, ophthalmologist;  
dermatologist or venereologist;  
gynaecologist; psychiatrist.

Generally, you will be issued a referral to specialized care if your family doctor determines that your health concern requires the involvement of a more specialized doctor. No referral is needed to turn to: dentist; ophthalmologist; dermatologist or venereologist; gynecologist; psychiatrist.

If you are insured by Estonian Health Insurance Fund (EHIF), you have the right to choose the specialist that is suitable for you and an appointment time in any health care institution which is under contract with the EHIF. The fund's contract partners serve all insured individuals regardless of their place of residence, and the list of contract partners can be found at [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/specialised-medical-care](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/specialised-medical-care)



Patients in need of specialized care are placed on a waiting list according to the seriousness of their condition. If a person has a very serious illness, the family doctor and the specialist doctor can work together to adjust the waiting list so that care can be given more quickly. Others whose health concern is less critical will receive care in an appropriate timeframe so that their condition does not worsen.

## Specialized healthcare is divided into three:

### 1 Ambulatory care

Ambulatory care means a doctor visit, in the course of which a person is examined, procedures are done (blood test, ECG, etc.), and if needed, further treatment is determined. The patient will not remain in the hospital.

### 2 Day care

Day care is a healthcare service for patients in need of assessment or treatment in a hospital bed during the day; the patient will not stay overnight.

### 3 Stationary care

Stationary care is given at a hospital and the patient must stay overnight or even longer.

When visiting a specialist, treatment facilities have the right to charge you up to 5 euros for a visit fee.

#### There is no in-patient fee:

- for children below the age of 2,
- in cases related to pregnancy and childbirth,
- in the case of intensive care.
- if the patient is to be referred to another doctor at the same facility.

During a hospital stay, you may be charged €2.50 per day for your room, up to a maximum of €25 per hospital stay.

The purpose of nursing care is to maintain and, where possible, improve the state of health and ability to cope of patients, to provide treatment and support to patients in a stable condition and, if necessary, to alleviate their ailments. Nursing care also helps people prepare for going to a care institution or home. Nursing care is provided both in inpatient (hospital or care institution) and outpatient (home nursing, home supportive care for cancer patients) environment, depending on the patient's need. A doctor decides whether a patient needs nursing care and provides a patient with a referral for the service.

A more in-depth description of Estonian health care system can be found on EHIF website: [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/estonian-health-care-system](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-care-services/estonian-health-care-system)



## 6

# E-health & Prescriptions

All healthcare service providers are required by law to document the provision of healthcare services and transmit your health information to the digital health information system - **Digilugu** (digital story in Estonian) as soon as possible. All of the most important medical data describing your health is gathered there.



Using an ID-card, residence permit card or mobile ID & Smart-ID, you can log in to the governmental gateway portal [www.eesti.ee](http://www.eesti.ee) or digital health information system [www.digilugu.ee](http://www.digilugu.ee) and see the registered health information of your own and your children (under the age of 18).

#### Through the health portal [www.digilugu.ee](http://www.digilugu.ee) you also can, for example.:

- view your own health information, i.e. medical documents compiled by doctors (i.e. case histories, analysis results, referrals);
- designate representatives for various functions;
- present declarations of will;
- check when your information has been viewed and by whom;
- view prescriptions and when they have been purchased;
- notify all medical institutions at once of changes to your contact information;
- set up reminders for appointments with doctors.

If you aren't sure how to access governmental digital services, please refer to: [www.id.ee](http://www.id.ee)

Medications available in Estonian pharmacies are divided in two categories: over-the-counter and prescription medications. By default, you can buy over-the-counter medications in unlimited amounts similarly to any other consumer goods (e.g. cough medicine, painkillers, food additives, vitamins), but a prescription from a doctor is required to buy prescription medications (e.g. antibiotics, tranquilizers, beta-blockers).



In Estonia, doctors do not sell prescription medicines - you will have to visit a pharmacy to buy them. Prescriptions themselves are by default issued digitally – the prescription is not printed out and is sent from the issuing doctor directly to the digital prescription center. Prescriptions can still be issued on paper, but usually in separate cases, e.g. when the patient plans to go abroad and wishes to buy prescription medication there.

To purchase a prescription medication, you must have an identity document with you in the pharmacy with your picture and Estonian identity number. You can use, for instance, an ID card, driver's license, or passport.

The Estonian digital prescription is also accepted at Finnish pharmacies. When purchasing a prescribed medicine, you'll only need to bring an ID card or passport.

Estonian Health Insurance Fund reimburses prescription medicines to a certain extent, in case their effectiveness has been previously thoroughly assessed and therefore, they have been included in the list of reimbursed pharmaceuticals. These pharmaceuticals are available at a 50, 75, 90 or 100% discount. The highest discount rates are available for principal pharmaceuticals needed for treating serious and chronic diseases, or for certain groups of the population (old-age and incapacity pensioners). The buyer has to pay a prescription fee of 2.5 euros for each prescription medicine.



More information on reimbursement and availability of pharmaceuticals can be found at the website of EHIF: [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/pharmaceuticals](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/pharmaceuticals)

In Estonia, prescriptions are usually issued digitally – the prescription is not printed out and is sent from the issuing doctor directly to the prescription centre.

# Health Insurance in Estonia

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Funding for the unified health insurance of Estonia comes from the insurance tax (social tax), which is paid on the income of workforce.

Estonia has unified national health insurance, which ensures quality medical care for every insured person. Thus, access to medical care does not depend on one's age, income, or

place of residence. Funding for the unified health insurance of Estonia comes from the insurance tax (social tax), which is paid on the income of workforce. National health insurance coverage is supervised and medical expenses are paid by Tervisekassa – Estonian Health Insurance Fund (EHIF). It should be noted that most adult patients covered by the national health insurance are still required to pay medical fees, such as in-patient fees, co-payments towards prescriptions, etc.

An insured person is a permanent resident of the Republic of Estonia or a person living in Estonia by virtue of a temporary residence permit or by the right of permanent residence, who pays the social tax for himself/herself or for whom the payer of social tax is required to pay social tax.

More information about who are eligible for health insurance and on which grounds is available here: [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-insurance](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/health-insurance)

If you are uninsured, you can either apply for a voluntary state insurance by EHIF or purchase insurance from a private provider, for example from:

**INGES**

[www.inges.ee/en/](http://www.inges.ee/en/)

**ERGO**

[www.ergo.ee/en/](http://www.ergo.ee/en/)

**SALVA**

[www.salva.ee/en/](http://www.salva.ee/en/)

# Health Insurance in Estonia under certificate S1

for old age pensioner, posted worker, cross-border worker or worker in several countries

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Pensioners moving to Estonia from another EU Member State have the right to receive medical care in Estonia on equal terms with Estonian old age pensioners. In order to prove this right, certificates S1 issued by the social or health insurance institution of the country from which the person receives retirement payment.

In order to receive medical care in Estonia a cross-border worker, an employee or an employee in several countries posted to Estonia from another EU Member State, the European Economic Area member state, Switzerland or United Kingdom must apply for the certificate S1 from his home country. Certificates S1 must always be submitted to the Estonian Health Insurance Fund.

Person must bring certificate S1 to the EHIF's customer service office or send it by regular mail. After the S1 certificate is registered, the person will be notified in writing of the granting of health insurance.

More information:

[https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/health/when-living-abroad/health-insurance-cover/index\\_en.htm](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/health/when-living-abroad/health-insurance-cover/index_en.htm)



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# European Health Insurance Card in the European Union

If you have Estonian national health insurance coverage and you stay temporarily in another EU member state, you can receive necessary medical care on equal terms to insured people living in such a country.

Necessary medical care is considered to be the treatment of an unexpected health disorder occurring during a stay in another European Union country. Necessary medical care must be medically justified and a doctor must consider the expected duration of treatment and the nature of the health care service. Necessary medical care covers, for example, high fever, abdominal pain, heart attack or accidental injury.

You will have to provide to a medical institution in another EU member state your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or a replacement certificate and your identity document. The right to receive health services on the basis of the EHIC applies only in medical institutions belonging to the public health care system (it does not include private clinics). With a valid Estonian national health insurance coverage, you can apply for the EHIC card and related documents at the Estonian Health Insurance Fund or order it from the state portal:

**PS!** Third-country nationals and stateless people can not use the European Health Insurance Card or its replacement certificate to receive treatment in Denmark, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. Before traveling to these countries, we recommend signing a separate health insurance contract with a private insurance company.

More information:

[www.tervisekassa.ee/en/kontaktpunkt/medical-care-europe/european-health-insurance-card](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/kontaktpunkt/medical-care-europe/european-health-insurance-card)

# Private Healthcare

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The advantage of private healthcare lies in shorter waiting times and usually the services can be offered in other languages than Estonian. In private hospitals and clinics, you will have to pay for the services yourself. If you have a private insurance, you should firstly check with your insurance provider if the insurance might cover some of the fees. To find a suitable private clinic, ask for recommendations from your friends, your family doctor, your insurer or search online.

## Some clinics with websites in English:

### Fertilitas

fertilitas.ee

### Qualitas

qualitas.ee

### Elite

elitekliinik.ee

### Valvekliinik

valvekliinik.ee

### Sinu Arst

sinuarst.ee

### Confido\*

confido.ee

### Elva Hospital private clinic

Tartu – Vaksali str 17

tipparst.ee

ehaigla.ee

\*Confido health consultation line 1500

(doctors and nurses available every day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., cost 2,50 €/min + provider fee)

**Minudoc.ee** offers online consultations in English, Estonian and Russian languages with various medical specialists – which can be a quick and easy option for simple medical advice. The service is appointment based, with the exact price stated for each appointment.

**Viveo Health** offers fast online access to medical care, family doctors and consultations in English, Estonian and Russian languages. The service is available for individuals as well as for companies as a benefit of their employees. The service is offered in monthly paid packages.

**Salu.md** offers primary healthcare-related online and physical consultations (in Tallinn) in English, Estonian and Russian languages 7 days a week.

# Child Health Development

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## The family nurse's

job is to advise the parents on child nutrition, hygiene, care, prevention of accidents, and the like.

A healthy infant is monitored by a family doctor and nurse during the first year of life prophylactically on a monthly basis. In these visits, children are also weighed and measured. In addition, the family nurse's job is to advise the parents on child nutrition, hygiene, care, prevention of accidents, and the like. A pediatrician visit is not intended for a healthy infant. If necessary, the family doctor will refer the child to a medical specialist, such as a neurologist or orthopedist.

There is no health care provider in the kindergarten who could competently assess the state of health of the child. In practice, however, there may be situations where a parent wants to take their child who shows clear symptoms of a disease to kindergarten, while parents of other children want to protect their child from a possible risk of infection. It is important to keep in mind the well-being of both the child with symptoms and other children. If kindergarten staff have any doubts about the child's health, they can advise the parent to contact their family physician.

A 6–7 years old child must undergo a pre-school health examination by a family physician. The physician assesses the child's development and readiness for school. Among other things, visual and auditory acuity and speech development are checked. In case of abnormalities, the physician can refer the child for further examination, to a speech therapist or ophthalmologist. You should take your child to the health check-up well before the school starts, as early as in spring. Then, you will have enough time to solve any problems found, for example, by

buying glasses. A project on the integration of children with diabetes into school life has started well; it helps to diagnose the disease before school and respective specialists provide necessary training and support to school staff.

When a child is admitted to school, the consent of the parent to provide school health care is requested. From 1 April 2020, the school nurse will perform health examinations for 1st, 3rd, 7th, and 11th grade students. Fifth and 9th grade students have to go to their family physician for a health check-up — it is the responsibility of parents to make these appointments!

More information and tips regarding monitoring the health of your child can be found at:



# Dental Care

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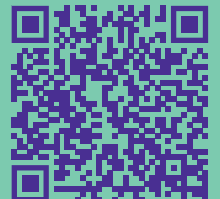
Caring for teeth should start at a young age. You should clean your baby's mouth regularly even before the first teeth are cut. The first visit to the dentist could take place when the child cuts their first tooth or when the child is about one year old. You can get the first advice on oral health from a midwife or family nurse in your child's first year of life.

Home hygiene helps to prevent caries. You can start with constant monitoring already when the baby cuts their first teeth. It is recommended to start visiting a dentist regularly when the child is three years old. On the first visits, the parent should stay with the child for support. The most important thing is the positive experience a child gets from the first visits. Children who are already familiar with the dentist and have pleasant experiences will feel comfortable later. When a child is afraid of the dentist, it requires patience from everyone.

Estonian Health Insurance Fund (EHIF) pays for dental care for insured persons under the age of 19. After the child has reached the age of 19, free dental care is provided for one year only if the need for treatment arose during the last visit before the age of 19. A parent has the right to choose a dentist for their child. However, always check that the chosen dentist has a contract with EHIF — contractual partners are listed on website of EHIF. If there is no contract, the parent must pay for the service in full and this money cannot be claimed from EHIF.

EHIF pays only for the services listed in the EHIF list of health care services:

[www.tervisekassa.ee/hambaravi-partnerid](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/hambaravi-partnerid)



In major cities, dentists can generally communicate in Russian or English, but it is always a good idea to check whether the doctor of your choice speaks a language that you can understand. School nurses also work with dentists to refer children for preventive examinations at the age of 7, 9, and 12. If a child needs dental care, it must be provided with the family's knowledge and approval.

Pregnant women and mothers of children under one year of age receive dental benefits of up to 85 euros per year. The patient must pay at least 15% of the bill herself.

Dental care costs for all adults with health insurance can be reimbursed by up to 40 euros per year, but the recipient's own contribution is 50% of the expenditure.

Recipients of state issued pension, partially or completely disabled persons, and senior citizens over the age of 63 receive dental benefits of up to 85 euros per year. The patient must pay at least 15% of the bill himself or herself.

More information can be found at [www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/dental-care](http://www.tervisekassa.ee/en/people/dental-care)

# Vaccination

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Information about ongoing public vaccination against COVID-19 coronavirus in Estonia can be found on the website: [www.vaktsineeri.ee/en/](http://www.vaktsineeri.ee/en/)

Science and technology have given us an efficient tool for protecting ourselves from many contagious diseases.

Vaccines guarantee people's health both today and in the distant future. By vaccinating, you protect both yourself and everybody else from dangerous contagious diseases.

The vaccines available in Estonia can be divided into two. Some of these are part of the national immunization schedule and are free of charge when administered at the time set out in the schedule. The rest are administered at the recommendation of a doctor or if the person themselves expresses their wish to get vaccinated; a fee is charged for vaccinations like this (e.g. tick-borne encephalitis vaccination).

If a child that arrives in Estonia has documents concerning vaccination in a foreign country, the previous vaccinations of the child are compared to the Estonian vaccination plan and the lacking vaccinations are performed or the vaccination series are completed. In addition to the planned immunization of children and youths, adults need to be vaccinated as well, especially due to epidemiological indications.

Vaccination is voluntary in Estonia and a parent or legal guardian must make the vaccination decision on behalf of the child. The information necessary for making a decision can be obtained from a healthcare professional who provides vaccination services (for example, a family physician or a healthcare provider at school) and from the website [www.vaktsineeri.ee/en](http://www.vaktsineeri.ee/en).

# Pregnancy & Childbirth

If you have a question/concern about your pregnancy or about your baby's health, you can contact [Callmidwife.com](http://Callmidwife.com) helpline **12252**. National midwife helpline works around 24/7 (on weekends and public holidays) and provides counselling in Estonian, English and Russian.

A pregnant woman living in Estonia and whose pregnancy has been identified by a doctor or a midwife at a public or private health care provider is entitled to national health insurance coverage after providing an application and document issued by a doctor or midwife verifying the pregnancy to EHIF. The national health coverage is valid after EHIF has processed the documents and the insurance cover will terminate three months after the estimated date of delivery as determined by a doctor or midwife. Further information can be found at the website of EHIF or by calling customer service at **+372 669 6630** or [info@tervisekassa.ee](mailto:info@tervisekassa.ee).

## Monitoring of pregnancy

Women visit the gynaecologist at least twice during pregnancy (first trimester ultrasound screening + blood serum test (OSCAR test), anatomy ultrasound) – these tests are free of charge in public maternity hospitals and for insured women. In addition, maternity hospitals as well as most major private clinics (e.g. Qvalitas, Fertilitas, Medicum) offer additional paid counselling and examinations (image or video of the foetus with a 3D device, panorama non-invasive prenatal test, Nip-tify test, etc.). Thereafter, visits to the midwife or gynaecologist will usually take place once a month, at the end of the pregnancy, or more frequently if necessary. During pregnancy, you can also contact both the midwife and the clinic reception to register an appointment with a clinical psychologist or social worker.

## Giving birth

For insured women, childbirth in a medical facility that is a contractual partner of the Estonian Health Insurance Fund is free of charge.

A midwife will support and assist you during childbirth. Generally, there is a midwife on duty present during childbirth. If you want to have the midwife who consulted you during your pregnancy present, you can choose to use the paid personal midwife service.

Please note! In Estonia, caesarean section is performed only if it is required for medical purposes. Caesarean section is not performed without immediate need and at the patient's request, as it may involve serious risks.

If you decide to give birth at home, you should contact a midwife with a valid certificate for assistance during childbirth, as they are experienced specialists, and by law, only a certified midwife can issue a child's birth certificate. You can use services of a doula, but in Estonia, doulas are not considered healthcare professionals and they cannot issue birth certificates. If you are unsure about your birth assistant's qualification, you can contact Estonian Health Board at **794 3500** or [info@terviseamet.ee](mailto:info@terviseamet.ee).

## Some of the certified midwives for home birth assistance:

- OÜ Kodusünnitus, **+372 5454 2505**, [ingrid@kodusynnitus.ee](mailto:ingrid@kodusynnitus.ee);
- Sünnitusabi OÜ, **+372 512 7827**, [synnitusabi@gmail.com](mailto:synnitusabi@gmail.com);
- Pingeprii OÜ, **+372 564 7732**, [hali.viilukas@kliinikum.ee](mailto:hali.viilukas@kliinikum.ee).

# National health care funded maternity wards:

## Tallinn

- 1 Pelgulinna Maternity Hospital  
Sõle str 23
- 2 Maternity Hospital of the Central Hospital  
Ravi str 18

## Tartu

- 3 Tartu University Hospital Women's Clinic  
L. Puusepa str 8, building G2

## Pärnu

- 4 Pärnu Hospital  
Ristiku str 1

## Ida-Virumaa

- 5 Narva Hospital  
Haigla str 7, Narva
- 6 Ida-Viru Central Hospital  
Tervise str 1, Kohtla-Järve

## Võrumaa

- 7 South-Estonian Hospital  
Meegomäe küla, Võru vald

## Järvamaa

- 8 Järvamaa Hospital  
Pärnu str 53, Paide

## Viljandi

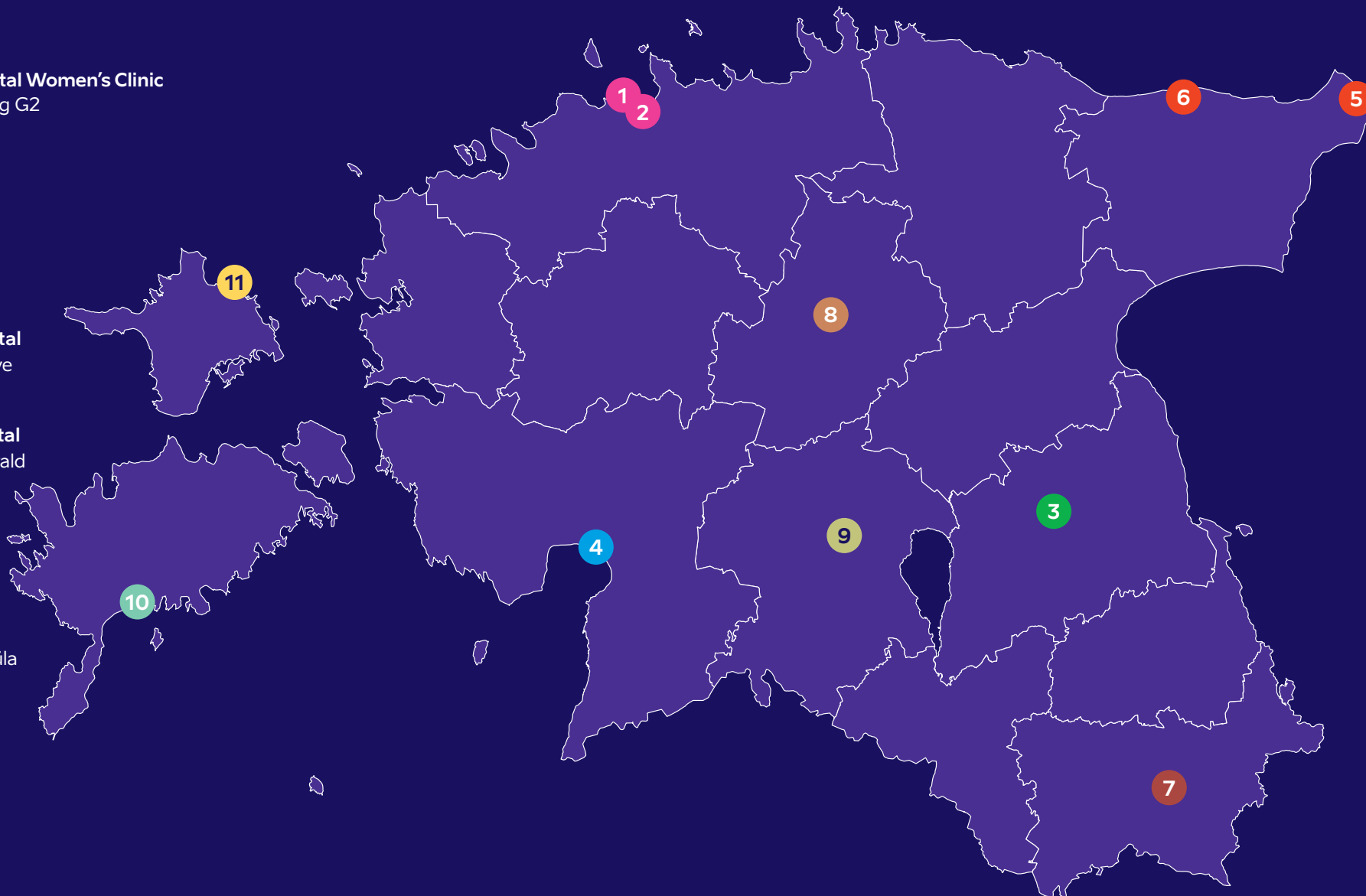
- 9 Viljandi Hospital  
Pärna tee 3, Jämejala küla

## Saaremaa

- 10 Kuressaare Hospital  
Aia str 25, Kuressaare

## Hiiumaa

- 11 Hiiumaa Hospital  
Rahu str 2, Kärkla



# Important steps



It is important to schedule your first visit before the 12<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy!

PS!

Within one month from the day of the child's birth, the **birth must be registered** at the local government or by submitting an electronic application at [rahvastikuregister.ee](http://rahvastikuregister.ee) using an ID-card. You will be entitled to various benefits and allowances once the birth has been registered.



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More information about family benefits is available here: [www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en/family-benefits-and-allowances/family-benefits-overview](http://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en/family-benefits-and-allowances/family-benefits-overview)

In addition to state benefits, some local governments provide additional benefits to their residents; for more information, please contact the social welfare institution of your local government.

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All children have health insurance until they reach the age of 19. Newborns, whose principal place of residence is in Estonia, as entered in the population register, are automatically registered to the practice of their mother's family physician (if available).



# Mental Health Concerns

Emergency psychiatric care is **free of charge**.

The World Health Organization describes mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community.

If a person feels that their symptoms related to mental health are starting to interfere with their life, it is wise to seek professional advice. Changes in circadian rhythm, diet, relationships, and coping at work or school may occur over time, but these signs are easier to notice than, for example, decreased happiness. It is also a good idea to listen to the thoughts and observations of people close to you. For example, if you have one or two symptoms of depression within a few days or weeks, there is no need to worry; however, if the symptoms persist for a month or longer, there is reason to seek help. If you have thoughts or plans of suicide, seek help immediately!

## Whom to Contact?

### Family physician

A family physician can prescribe medication and perform examinations for possible physical illnesses, which can also cause symptoms similar to a mental health disorder. This is particularly suitable if you have a good relationship with your family physician. A family physician can also refer you to psychotherapy through the Therapy Foundation.

### Crisis aid and psychiatrist on duty

First aid within a few hours and quick hospitalization if necessary. Keep in mind that, as a rule, one quick visit is not enough. Emergency psychiatric care is free of charge.

In major cities, emergency care is available 24 hours a day:

**Psychiatric clinic emergency reception in Tallinn:**  
617 2650, Paldiski mnt 52

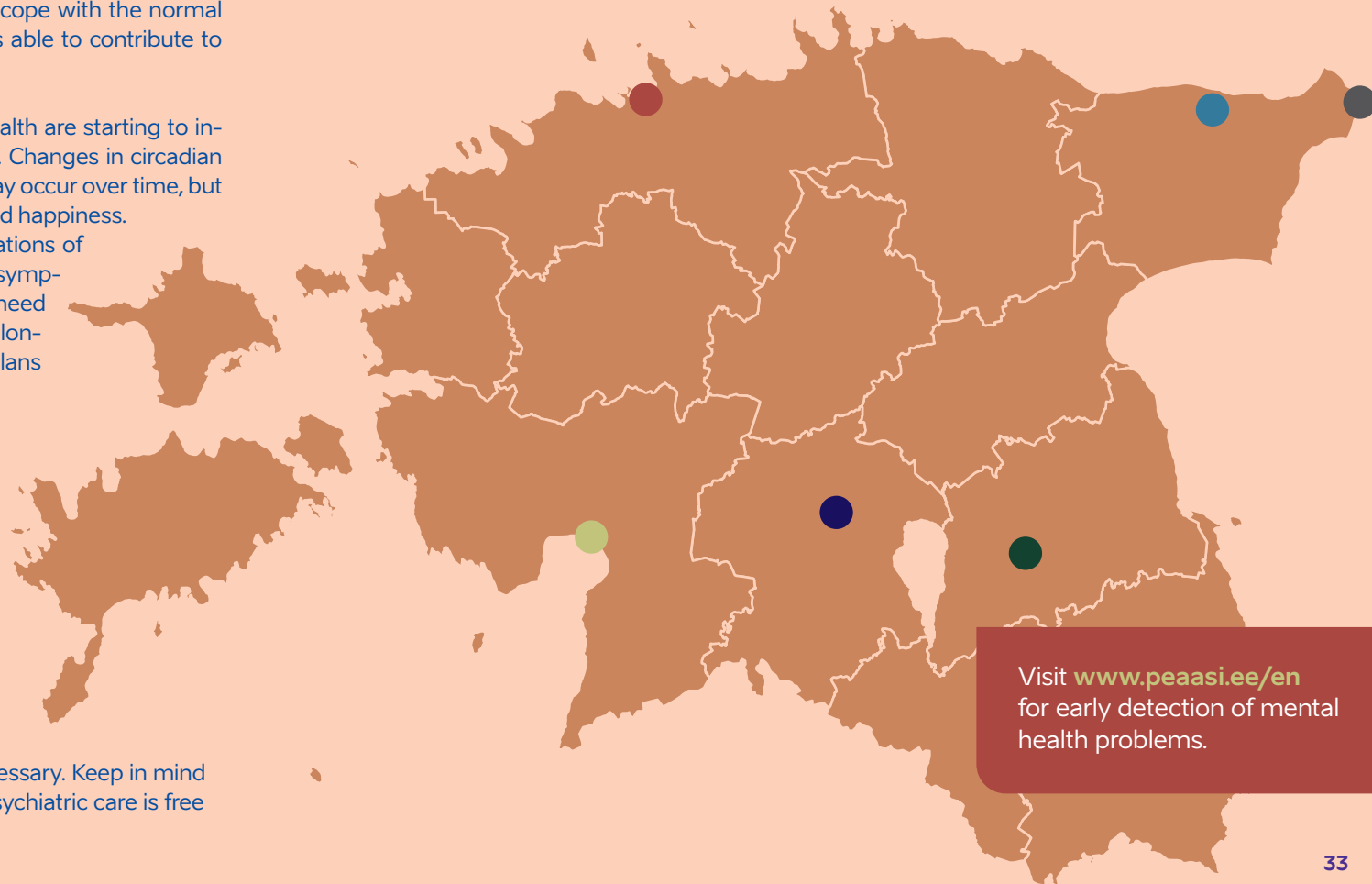
**Psychiatric clinic emergency reception in Tartu:**  
731 8764, Raja tn 31

**Psychiatric department emergency reception in Pärnu:**  
516 0379, Ristiku tn 1

**Psychiatric clinic emergency reception in Viljandi:**  
435 4255, Jämejala, Pargi tee 6

**Emergency medical department in Narva:** 357 1795, Haigla 1

**Emergency medical department in Ahtme:** 331 1074, Ahtme mnt 95



Visit [www.peasi.ee/en](http://www.peasi.ee/en) for early detection of mental health problems.

### Psychiatrist's appointment at an outpatient clinic

You can make an appointment by simply calling the reception of an outpatient clinic; a referral is not required. A psychiatrist can evaluate the patient's state of health, give appropriate recommendations for treatment, prescribe prescription drugs, and refer patients to a psychotherapy. Please keep in mind that there may be long appointment wait times, as all medical specialists have waiting lists. You can call the receptions of different outpatient clinics to get the first available time, but the estimated wait time is about a month or two. A 5-euro visit fee applies to patients over 18 years of age with health insurance.

### Clinical psychologist's appointment at an outpatient clinic

A referral from a psychiatrist is required. A clinical psychologist can evaluate the patient's state of health, give recommendations for treatment, refer patients to psychiatrist if necessary, but does not prescribe medication. A 5-euro visit fee applies to patients over 18 years of age with health insurance.

### Appointment with a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist at a private clinic

The same treatment options as in outpatient clinics, but appointments are subject to a fee; a referral is not required. Private clinics and medical practitioners also have contracts with the Health Insurance Fund or the local government, which means that only part of the costs have to be paid for. The Unemployment Insurance Fund and Victim Support may also make a referral to a private clinic. Please contact the respective institutions for more information. The waiting lists in private practices are usually shorter than in outpatient clinics.

# Ask for help

## Call a helpline

- **Victim support crisis hotline 11 6006**  
offers counselling and information on victim rights and support systems; the service is available 24 hours a day. In addition, you will be assured that the information you provide will reach the relevant professionals who can help you.  
**24/7, EST, EN, RU**
- **Emotional support hotline 116 123**  
all people, regardless of religion or world view, are welcome to call the hotline for support to overcome a mental crisis caused by disease, accident, or difficult life situations and to get a sense of security.  
**24/7, EST, EN, RU**
- **Lifeline emotional support hotline**  
(in Estonian **655 8088**, in Russian **655 5688**)  
In the evenings, from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- People who do not wish to or cannot make a call can alternatively receive help through an **online chat** at **[www.palunabi.ee](http://www.palunabi.ee)**

## Seek student counselling (for international students)

At the University of Tartu:

**[www.ut.ee/en/studies/psychological-counselling/](http://www.ut.ee/en/studies/psychological-counselling/)**

At the Estonian Academy of Arts:

**[www.artun.ee/en/studies/support-services/](http://www.artun.ee/en/studies/support-services/)**

At the Estonian University of Life Sciences:

**[www.emu.ee/en/studies/practical-information/](http://www.emu.ee/en/studies/practical-information/)**

At TalTech:

**[www.taltech.ee/en/psychological-counselling/](http://www.taltech.ee/en/psychological-counselling/)**

At the University of Tallinn:

**[www.tlu.ee/en/psychological-counselling](http://www.tlu.ee/en/psychological-counselling/)**

At the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre:

**[www.emta.ee/en/studies/advice-and-assistance/psychological-counselling/](http://www.emta.ee/en/studies/advice-and-assistance/psychological-counselling/)**

