

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION	
Name:	Patients who returned to the emergency department within 72 hours
Calculation:	Patients who returned to an emergency department or urgent care centre within 72 hours of discharge from the emergency department = $\left(\frac{\text{Total number of return visits within 72 hours of discharge}}{\text{Total number of emergency department discharges}} \right) \times 100$ Metric: Percentage of emergency department patients who return within 72 hours.
Description:	All patients discharged from the emergency department who return, whether planned or unplanned, within 72 hours to <i>any</i> emergency department or urgent care centre in Alberta are included. ²⁰
Data source:	National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS)
Assumptions:	None
Limitations:	1. Patients who seek other healthcare services within 72 hours of being discharged from the emergency department (e.g., primary care/family physician) are not captured in this data source. 2. Only patients who had a face-to-face interaction with the provider during their visit to the emergency department (initial or return) or urgent care centre (return only) are included in this data source. 3. For patients returning to a different emergency department than the one they last sought care in, matching is done on ULI or PHN. Occasionally these unique identifiers are recorded incorrectly, resulting in being unable to identify a return visit. 4. Return visits for patients in the emergency department during the last three days of March, June, September, and December may not be captured due to the unavailability of the NACRS data for the subsequent month (i.e., the return visit may have occurred after the end of the month). As such, the values reported for March, June, September, and December (and quarters ending in these months) may change when the data is available and updated for the next quarter.

²⁰ Return visits to the emergency department are sometimes split to separate out planned and unplanned return visits within 72 hours of discharge from the emergency department; however, this measure includes both planned and unplanned return visits.