



## Healthcare

The Swiss healthcare system is based on federal structures which give the cantons far-reaching authority in healthcare matters (e.g. hospital care, high-end medicine, admission to practice and prevention). The federal government on the other hand is responsible for mandatory health insurance and the control of communicable diseases.

In Basel-Stadt, the Department of Public Health is responsible for the promotion, protection, maintenance and improvement of the population's physical and psychological health.

### General practitioner

After your arrival in Switzerland, it is advisable to find a general practitioner (GP). Your GP will be your first point of call for any health-related questions and will treat you when you are sick or refer you to a specialist. It is not necessary to go to hospital unless there is an emergency or you have been referred to the hospital by a doctor. If your symptoms are mild, you can also ask your pharmacist for advice. The pharmacy also dispenses over-the-counter drugs that require no prescription. The cost of the drugs will be paid by the mandatory health insurance in the majority of cases. Further details will be provided below.

- The website of the *Vereinigung der Hausärztinnen und Hausärzte beider Basel* [association of general practitioners in Basel-Stadt and Baselland] [www.vhbb.ch](http://www.vhbb.ch) has all the relevant information about GPs and paediatricians and specifies the languages they speak.
- A list of all pharmacies in Basel-Stadt is available at: [www.medizinischdienste.bs.ch](http://www.medizinischdienste.bs.ch) → Fachinformationen → Heilmittelwesen → Liste der Apotheken in Basel-Stadt

### Emergencies

In emergencies, call an ambulance or go directly to the nearest hospital's A&E department.

Examples of emergencies include:

- serious chest pain, heart problems
- sudden bleeding that doesn't stop
- open fractures
- severe pneumonia
- allergic reactions to food, drugs or insect bites

### Emergency numbers:

Ambulance: [144](tel:144)

Police: [117](tel:117)

Fire brigade: [118](tel:118)

Toxic poisoning: [145](tel:145)

Helicopter rescue, *Rega*: [1414](tel:1414)

The procedure in case of an emergency can be found here:

<https://www.bs.ch> → Publikationen → Alle Publikationen des Kanton Basel-Stadt → Stichwortsuche → Notfallflyer

### **Iodine tablets for New Arrivals**

The Canton of Basel-Stadt with its municipalities (Riehen and Bettingen) are located in the vicinity of a Swiss nuclear power plant. As a precaution, you will receive a voucher for iodine tablets with your registration. The iodine tablets are free of charge and can be obtained from any pharmacy or drugstore. For more information, please consult the following websites:

[www.bag.admin.ch](http://www.bag.admin.ch) → Umwelt & Gesundheit → Strahlung, Radioaktivität & Schall → Radiologische Ereignisse und Notfallvorsorge → Notfallvorsorge bei radiologischen Ereignissen → Jodtabletten  
<https://www.kantonslabor.bs.ch> → Umweltschutz → ABC-Schutz → ABC-Ereignisvorsorge

### **Universitätsspital Basel [University Hospital Basel]**

Spitalstrasse 21/  
Petersgraben 4  
CH-4031 Basel  
Phone [+41 61 265 25 25](tel:+41612652525)  
[www.unispital-basel.ch](http://www.unispital-basel.ch)  
[info@unispital-basel.ch](mailto:info@unispital-basel.ch)

### **Notfallapotheke [Emergency Pharmacy Basel]**

Petersgraben 3 (opposite University Hospital)  
CH-4051 Basel  
Phone [+41 61 263 75 75](tel:+41612637575)  
[www.notfallapothekebasel.ch](http://www.notfallapothekebasel.ch)  
[info@notfallapothekebasel.ch](mailto:info@notfallapothekebasel.ch)

### **Health insurance**

Health insurance is mandatory for everyone who lives or works in Switzerland, irrespective of his or her nationality. After your arrival in Switzerland, you must join a health insurance scheme within three months. With over 80 health insurance providers offering the same basic benefits package, you have a wide range of companies to choose from. We advise signing a contract as soon as possible since you will be paying insurance premiums as of the date of your arrival in Switzerland, irrespective of the date of the contract conclusion. All health insurance providers are obliged to insure you under the basic package, which covers a share of the treatment costs charged by doctors and hospitals in the Canton of Basel-Stadt. The remaining shares of the costs for which you are responsible are referred to as the patient's contribution. Dental treatment is not covered by the basic package.

The federal government's [www.priminfo.ch](http://www.priminfo.ch) website provides a useful comparison of the insurance plans

offered by health insurance providers.

**Exemptions:** Certain groups of Swiss residents may be exempted from mandatory insurance, provided they have an equivalent insurance in an EU/EFTA country. For instance:

- Pensioners who exclusively draw their pension from a EU/EFTA country
- Employees working in a EU/EFTA country
- Students in the case of temporary residence and equivalent insurance
- Employees on temporary assignments in Switzerland

Further information as well as an application and request for exemption from mandatory insurance is available on the homepage of the *Gemeinsame Einrichtung KVG* foundation.

[www.kvg.org](http://www.kvg.org) → Private Persons → Compulsory Insurance → Cantons → Basel-Stadt

Further information can be found in the “Clever krankenversichert” brochure of the *Gesundheitsdepartement Base-Stadt*. [Department of Public Health Basel-Stadt], which is available at [www.bs.ch/publikationen](http://www.bs.ch/publikationen)

### Reduced premiums

With health insurance premiums becoming a substantial burden for many households, health insurance policyholders in Basel-Stadt who meet certain conditions are entitled to a premium reduction. For any questions regarding reduced premiums, please contact the *Amt für Sozialbeiträge*.

#### **Amt für Sozialbeiträge [Social Insurance Contributions Office]**

Prämienverbilligung [Reduced premiums]

Grenzacherstrasse 62

CH-4005 Basel

Phone [+41 61 267 87 11](tel:+41612678711)

[asb-pv@bs.ch](mailto:asb-pv@bs.ch)

[www.asb.bs.ch](http://www.asb.bs.ch) → Krankenversicherung → Prämienverbilligung

### Accident insurance

Mandatory accident insurance [*Unfallversicherung (UV)*] insures employees against the financial consequences of occupational and non-occupational accidents and work-related illnesses.

In Switzerland, all employees who work for a minimum of 8 hours a week are automatically insured against occupational and non-occupational accidents via their employer. Self-employed and unemployed persons are insured against accidents as part of their mandatory health insurance.

**Tip:** Some insurance providers fail to specify that accident insurance is not required if you work for more than 8 hours a week in an employed capacity. If this is the case, you do not need to take out accident insurance.