

Urgent Care Site Selection Tips



Prime Users of Urgent Care

- Families with children, Millennials and Generation X are all prime users of Urgent Care clinics.
- Lower-income areas often do not have intense medical competition and can generate substantial patient volumes.
- Women aged 24-45 working outside the home with children are especially heavy users of Urgent Care clinics.

Key Site Factors

- Look for sites with high visibility and substantial traffic volume (greater than 15K per day).
- Prime Opportunity Zones are visible sites in retail corridors near businesses such as groceries, banks, pharmacies, dry cleaners, daycares, coffee shops, fitness centers, etc. that generate consistent daily or weekly traffic from consumers.
- According to cell phone Mobile Location Data, close proximity to a strong retail draw that generates a minimum of 85,000 customers per year is beneficial. The time spent at the main retail draw should be over 35 minutes per visit. This is a strong indicator of personal/family shopping rather than just in and out traffic.
- According to a national analysis of commercial properties, the median volume of Retail space in a 1-mile radius around Urgent Care clinics is 460,000 sf. When looking for sites in Rural markets pay extra close attention to where people do their shopping.
- Individual signage is preferred to shared signage. An Urgent Care clinic's most valuable marketing asset is its location on a high-traffic street with clear and visible signage. When consumers drive past your prominent sign as part of their regular commute, that sign begins to act as a billboard – providing daily reinforcement that your clinic is available to meet their needs.
- Convenient parking is essential: 5-6 spaces per 1,000 SF. While immense parking lots in shopping centers may offer ample parking, the distance to walk to your clinic could pose a problem for injured individuals if no parking spaces are available close to your clinic.
- Freestanding buildings with prominent signage tend to draw the most patients. If a freestanding building is not an option, end-cap spaces are preferred over in-line spaces because of superior visibility.

Warning Signs: Things to Watch Out For

- Areas with a lack of adjacent retail draws or excessive vacancy rates are usually not ideal locations.
- Poor retail synergy: Look for adjacent retailers that are considered weekly or daily destinations. For instance, an adjacent grocery store is preferred to an adjacent car dealership; an adjacent pharmacy is preferred to an adjacent art gallery.
- Watch out for too much direct medical competition in the area. As the Population Per Urgent Care dips below 20,000 for your medical trade area, it becomes increasingly challenging to attract adequate patient volumes.
- Physical barriers. From a physical standpoint, Interstate highways, hills, rivers, and large expanses of undeveloped land often negatively impact the size and shape of your medical trade area.
- Psychological barriers. From a psychological standpoint, different street lighting levels, a change in the character and physical conditions of the buildings lining a street, railroad tracks, income levels, ethnic composition, and crime levels can impact the size and shape of your medical trade area.
- Lack of convenient parking. A lack of parking or inconveniently situated parking can be the “kiss of death” for Urgent Care clinics.
- Beware of sites that are challenging to get into or out of. Be wary of selecting a site restricted exclusively to right turns in and right turns out. Such limited access will reduce the number of patients you see.
- Poor curb appeal. An Urgent Care clinic needs an exterior that invites potential patients to enter. An uninviting exterior resembles a home seller with weeds and trash in his front yard. Buyers keep on driving by assuming that it's the same inside.
- Building setback. The closer your clinic is located to the street, the better. If you were to put yourself in the shoes of a first-time patient, which of the following Urgent Care clinics would you most likely notice: the one located 100, 250, or 500 feet off the road?
- Excessive signage restrictions. Signs are essential in helping patients find you, creating a business identity, and building brand recognition. Zoning regulations in the community where you are opening your clinic will regulate the size, total sign area, and placement of your signs. In addition, some property owners may also place restrictions on signs. If a potential location does not allow you to have prominent, attractive, and functional exterior signage, beware!
- Wrong space size: An effective space typically ranges from 2,800 to 3,500 SF for most Urgent Care clinics. If a space is too small, the services offered may be too limited, and the waiting area may be inadequate during peak times like flu season. If the space is too large, you will experience inflated costs without generating incremental revenue.

NEXT STEP

Do you have an Urgent Care Real Estate question? Call Dean Hutchison at **(813) 438-4951** or email him at dean@nationalucr.com. To learn more about National UC Realty, please visit www.nationalucr.com.