



1 Medical institutions

1-3 Process of examination

(1) General process of the initial examination

You should first search for a hospital/clinic that caters to the sickness/injury you want to have treated. You should present your health insurance card at the reception of the hospital/clinic. After that you wait at the waiting room, before you proceed to a clinical examination, followed by payment and receipt of your prescription medicines. The illustration below describes the process more specifically.

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1. You wish to have treatment for sickness or injury

You search for a clinic/hospital that caters to your sickness/injury



2. You visit the clinic/ hospital

You present your health insurance card at the reception, saying “Shoshin desu” (this is my initial visit). In many cases you are then asked to fill in necessary information on a examination application form (jushin moshikomi sho) or medical chart (monshin hyou). On a medical chart (monshin hyou), you write about the condition of your current sickness and your clinical history, whether or not you have any allergic reactions and so on. When you have filled it in, you return it to the reception and then wait at the waiting room.



3. Clinical examination

When your name is called, you enter the clinical room and receive an examination. When necessary, you also receive check-ups and certain treatment. Also when necessary, you will arrange the next appointment.





4. Payment

Generally speaking medical fees must be paid for in cash (credit cards may be used at some institutions). At some institutions, a nurse hands out a payment slip to you after you finish the examination. In this case, you bring the slip to the payment counter. Please keep the bill of receipt for your payment for the following reason: When your monthly medical payments exceed a certain level (depending on your income; normally 80,100 yen), you may be paid back part of the fees you have paid. When your annual medical payments exceed 100,000 yen, you may have a reduction of tax payments. In both cases you need to present the relevant bills of receipt.



5. Receipt of prescription medicines

Take the prescription you receive at the time of payment to a prescription pharmacy (chozai yakkyoku) and receive your medicine. You must pay for the medicines separately from the clinical fees (this is called external pharmacy or ingai yakkyoku). Some hospitals/clinics have a medicine counter within their facilities, in which case the medicine costs are included in the payment at the hospital/clinic (this is called internal pharmacy, or innnai yakkyoku).



* When you visit the clinic/hospital again after the initial time (shoshin), you check in at a vending machine for repeated visitors (saishin-ki), or alternatively you check in directly at the department that takes care of your case. At some institutions, you check in at the reception counter. After the check-in, the following process is the same as for the initial examination.