



HealthCore Policies and Informational Guide

Our mission is to provide excellence in medical care and personal service. We honor the doctor-patient relationship and encourage you to take an active role in your health.

GENERAL OFFICE POLICIES

Appointments

The office is open for appointments from 8:00am – 5:00pm, Monday through Friday; phones are answered until 4:00pm. We are closed for most major holidays. Annual physicals and routine follow-up appointments are generally scheduled in advance. Same day appointments are also available.

The office is also open Saturday mornings from 8:00am – 11:30am for acute illnesses. No appointment is necessary on Saturday's. However, new patient and annual physical appointments cannot be accommodated on Saturday's.

Please bring a current list of your medications, including dosage and directions, to each appointment. This list should include prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements.

Remember to see the front desk staff to checkout before leaving the office.

In order to honor all scheduled appointment times, we ask that you have a formal scheduled appointment for any service, including lab only and injection only appointments. Many times these services can be accommodated same day; we ask that you call in advance to make us aware you are coming. This is to ensure that we can provide the best possible service to all of our patients.

No-Show/Cancellation Policy

As a patient in our clinic, it is your responsibility to keep scheduled appointments. The clinic requires that all appointment cancellations be received by 3:00pm on the prior business day (example, by 3:00pm on Friday for a Monday appointment). Failure to cancel the appointment **before 3:00pm the business day prior** to the scheduled appointment will result in the assessment of a failed appointment fee of \$25. Any appointment scheduled and cancelled on the same day will also result in the \$25 failed appointment fee.

In order to continue to provide prompt attention to all of our scheduled patients, it is necessary to have a late arrival policy. The clinic will consider a "**failed appointment**" at any time a patient has not given the advance notice required above or has failed to arrive within 10 minutes of their appointment time. If a patient arrives 10 or more minutes late, they may be asked to reschedule and the appointment will be considered a "late cancellation" and result in the assessment of a failed appointment fee.

Telephone Calls

Our telephone is answered 24 hours a day. Calls are initially answered by an auto attendant. Please see the Phone Tree section below for navigation options. These options will lead you to the department which can handle your call most efficiently. After hours, a physician is always on call and available to handle urgent patient problems. Non-emergency calls, such as appointments, medications, refills and test results should be made between 8:00am and 4:00pm Monday-Friday.

Phone Tree (972) 284-7000

- Option 2 To schedule an appointment – see options listed below
 - For a same day, sick visit appointment – press 8
 - For a future appointment with Dr. Wooley or Dr. Reardon – press 1
 - For a future appointment with Dr. McKinney – press 2
 - For a future appointment with Dr. Phan or Dr. Khambati – press 3
- Option 3 To reach your physician's medical assistant or request a medication refill; then as follows:
 - Dr. Reardon – press 2
 - Dr. Phan – press 3
 - Dr. McKinney – press 4
 - Dr. Khambati – press 5
 - Dr. Wooley – press 6
- Option 4 To request a referral or copies of your medical records
- Option 5 To discuss a laboratory bill or a bill from HealthCore, or for assistance with your patient portal
- Option 6 For our hours, address, fax number or website address

Emergencies

If you have a true medical emergency, call 911 or go to the Emergency Center of the nearest hospital. Ask them to contact our office at (972) 284-7000.

Test Results

The results of laboratory and radiology tests are very important for the continued evaluation and management of your care. Some types of tests are performed in our office. Other samples are drawn in our laboratory and sent to other laboratories, as determined by your health insurance, for processing and results. It may take several days to get these test results back to our office. When having radiology test, scans, biopsies or any other procedure done outside our office, please know that we will make every effort to obtain the results as soon as possible. However, it could take 48 hours to a week for those results to reach us.

When calling our office for test results, please ask for your physician's medical assistant who will let you know if the results are available. If they are unavailable at the time of your call, we will notify you when they are available. **It is the normal process of our office to notify you of routine lab results or diagnostic tests by mail.**

Requests for Refills

Refills for medication, including those medications that have no remaining refills or requests for additional refills, should be called directly to your pharmacy. Your pharmacy will contact us for refill authorization, if necessary.

For controlled substances (also known as triplicate prescriptions), you must call our office, not the pharmacy. Triplicate prescriptions must be obtained from our office and hand-carried to the pharmacy by you or an authorized patient representative/family member. Please call at least 48 hours in advance for triplicate prescriptions. Triplicate prescription requests will be processed only during regular business hours, not on weekends or major holidays.

Referrals and Pre-Certifications

Your insurance may require a referral from your physician in order for you to see a specialist. Your insurance may also require pre-certification of office or outpatient services. As a courtesy, our office will make every reasonable effort to obtain these referrals and pre-certifications for you.

Pre-certifications are sometimes required for CAT scans, MRI scans and other diagnostic tests. Some managed care contracts specify the location for these services. Our staff is trained to help our patients through this process and will answer any questions you may have.

Requests for Medical Records

If you are in need of a copy of your medical records or if you wish to have a copy sent to another physician, we will be happy to prepare them and/or forward the request to our copy service. Please allow 15 business days for records request to be processed. A fee may be assessed by the copy service for personal copies with payment required before records will be released.

Payment for Services

We recognize the need for a clear understanding between you and our office regarding payment for services. Charges for professional services and treatment depend upon your diagnosis and the terms of your insurance contract. Co-payment and unmet annual deductibles are payable at the time of your visit. We accept cash, check, Visa, and MasterCard.

Insurance

Please notify us immediately if there are any changes in your coverage, employer or insurance company. When a change occurs, we will verify the new coverage and do our best to ensure a smooth transition. Our front office staff is always available during regular office hours to answer any questions you may have.

Talking to Your Doctor

You may not remember everything you want to ask your doctor. You may find it helpful to write down questions prior to your appointment. When you do get answers to your questions, write them down, too. That way, when you go home, you won't forget and you will be better equipped to answer questions that your family may have. Keep track of how you are feeling and any changes you notice so you can inform your doctor. By staying organized, you are helping yourself remain in control of your illness.

OFFICE FINANCIAL POLICY

Thank you for choosing HealthCore Physicians Group for your medical care. We care committed to providing you with quality, personal health care, and appreciate your commitment to adhere to this Financial Policy. By understanding our policy, we can provide you with the best service. Agreement with this policy is required for all medical care.

Except as indicated below, payment is required at the time services are provided unless other arrangements have been made in advance. We accept cash, personal in-state checks, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express. There is a \$40.00 service charge for each returned check.

OFFICE HOURS:

- Monday – Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm, by appointment only
- Saturday from 8:00am to 11:30am; this is a walk-in clinic for acute illnesses only
- As a courtesy to other patients, we request you arrive on time. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late for your scheduled appointment, you may be asked to reschedule. For after-hours and weekend emergencies, please call the office first. A message will guide you to the physician on call.

INSURANCE:

- We participate in most managed care plans and will bill your insurance plan as determined by our contract with each given plan. Copayments, deductibles, and coinsurance amounts are due at the time of service.
- If we do not participate with your managed care plan, payment in full is required at the time of service, unless other arrangements have been made in advance. We may be able to bill your plan as a courtesy to you and credit your account if we receive any additional payment.
- Knowing your insurance benefits – including eligibility, covered benefits, and medically necessary procedures – is your responsibility. Please contact the customer service department at your insurance company for question you may have regarding your coverage.
- You are responsible for any charges not covered by your insurance plan.

Proof of Insurance

- All patients must complete and/or update our registration form at each office visit.
- You must furnish valid and up-to-date proof of insurance coverage and a copy of your driver's license or other state-issued photo ID at each office visit.
- If you provide false or expired insurance information you will be responsible for the balance due for that visit.
- Please notify us of any changes in your insurance coverage prior to your appointment. Insurance denials for termination of coverage will be automatically billed to you.

Copayments, Deductibles and Coinsurance

- All copayments, unsatisfied deductibles and applicable coinsurance amounts must be paid at the time of service. By contractual law, your insurance company requires us to charge for, and you to pay for, all required copayments, coinsurance, deductibles and non-covered services.
- We will submit your insurance claims and assist you in any way reasonable to help get your claim paid.
- Your insurance company may need you to supply information directly to them. It is your responsibility to comply with their request(s) in a timely manner. Texas insurance law requires your insurance company to provide timely payment.

OUT-OF-NETWORK CARE / SELF-PAY:

- Please be aware that you have an option to seek care from physicians even though they are not participating in your insurance network. In this situation, your out-of-pocket expense will be greater than if you seek care from an in-network physician.
- As a courtesy to our out-of-network patients, we will file your insurance claim if desired, and may offer a reduction from our usual fees. Payment is still due at the time of service.
- This benefit also applies to individuals without insurance.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, CHARGES AND PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Due to the continued decline in reimbursement from insurance companies and their failure to pay for the following services, we are no longer able to absorb the cost of these services. Therefore, the following administrative services will be billed directly to you with payment being your responsibility. Our practice is committed to providing the highest quality of service to our patients while keeping our charges for administrative services at or below the usual and customary charges of other medical practices in our area.

Appointment Cancellations / Missed Appointments

- Broken appointments represent not only a cost to us, but also an inability to provide service to others who could have been seen in the time set aside for you.
 - We require 24 hours' notice of cancellation to avoid a cancellation fee. The cancellation fee is \$50 for new patient appointments and \$25 for follow-up appointments.
 - It is your responsibility to remember your appointment. We do not guarantee that reminder calls will be made in advance.

Prescription Refills

- New prescriptions will not be issued without first seeing your physician. Prescriptions for acute care or chronic conditions are written with an appropriate number of refills to complete the course of treatment or to last you until your next scheduled appointment.
 - You may be charged \$15 for any additional refills issued without seeing the physician or to replace a lost prescription.
 - All prescription requests are taken only during office hours and filled within 48 hours.

Prescription Prior Authorizations

- We will honor prior authorization requests from the patient, but the patient is responsible for contacting their insurance company to have them forward the prior authorization form to our office.
- A \$25 fee will be assessed for time to complete the prior authorization form. The fee must be paid before the prior authorization will be completed.
 - Any request for a forced change in your medication by your insurance company will require an office visit.
 - The patient will need to ask their insurance plan what "alternative medications" are covered and provide a list to their Physician.

Letters / Form Completion

- At the discretion of the Physician, letters and forms requiring medical review and physician signature are subject to a \$35 fee plus \$5 per page/side.
- This fee must be paid prior to the forms being completed.

Telephone Consultations / After-hours Calls

- Telephone consultations/after-hours calls for medical advice/treatment may be subject to a fee that is billed directly to you. Fees for these services vary based on complexity and range from \$30 to \$75 per call.

Requests for Medical Records

- In accordance with Texas law, HealthCore Physicians Group requires written requests for the release of medical records.
 - The administrative fee associated with retrieving and copying medical records is based on current Texas law and is dependent on the number of pages requested. Please take this into consideration when requesting copies of your medical records.

FAILURE TO PAY:

The practice provides patients who have delinquent financial accounts with a series of statements and collection notifications. Continued failure to respond to billing statements or make payments may result in the suspension of certain non-urgent services and ultimately dismissal from the practice. Please be advised that outstanding debts may be forwarded to a collection service where unpaid balances will be reported to the appropriate credit agencies.

REFUNDS AND OVERPAYMENTS:

Should you feel you have made an overpayment to our office or are awaiting a refund based on insurance reimbursement, please contact our Billing Office with questions. If you are entitled to a refund, our office will issue a refund check to the responsible party listed on the account, upon request. Due to the frequency of visits in primary care, if we do not receive a specific request for a refund, overpayments may be applied as a credit to the patient's account and applied to future visits in our office.

Should you have any questions about this policy or any billing issues, we encourage you to discuss them with our Billing Office. We appreciate your dedication to our physicians and are happy to have you as part of our practice.