



## Medical Specialists Inc.

### Practice Policies

1. **Prescription Refills:** If the office is notified by you or your pharmacy that a prescription refill is needed, it will be processed as quickly as possible. It may require up to forty-eight hours (two working days) for this request to be processed and for the prescription to be called to your pharmacy. If you do not hear from us, check with your pharmacy to see if it has been processed.
2. We also require that you provide us with at-least **3- business days** of notification prior to you running out of your medication. This will assist in possible delays that can occur with our attempts to refill your medication.

3. **Delays:** We realize your time is as valuable as ours. We try to keep our schedule running on time. Unfortunately, patients prior to your appointment may need unforeseen additional time. This will then push all other appointments behind. Please be patient and understanding of the needs of your fellow patients.

4. **After-Hours Emergencies:** There is a physician available for all emergencies after office hours. If you must speak with the on-call physician, you will be required to leave information with the answering service. The answering service relays the message to the physician, who will call you as soon as possible; but please realize that you may not be called immediately. If you anticipate that your problem will require a prescription to be called to your pharmacy, please have the phone number of the pharmacy handy when the doctor calls you back. People with emergencies such as shortness of breath, chest pain, or other severe problems, should go to the nearest Emergency Room or call 911.

5. **Phone Calls:** It may take up to forty-eight hours (two working days) for us to respond to routine messages or questions. This includes requests for lab results, requests for work notes, or questions about medications. Urgent messages or "sick calls" will be answered the same day, if they are received at least two hours before the end of the day. Please keep in mind that we may be trying to contact you. Please keep your phone line free, as we do get quite a few busy signals when we call patients back.

6. **Appointment Scheduling:** When asking for an appointment please tell us all the issues you would like to address so that we may try to accommodate your needs. (However, due to time constraints, it may not be possible to address more than one or two issues on any particular doctor visit.)

**7. Form Completion:** If you drop off a form to be completed for anything such as school physicals, work, insurance, or FMLA, please be advised that there is a charge for this service. You will be required to sign a form stating that you are aware that there will be a charge and that you agree to pay it. When your forms are complete, you will be notified by the staff so that you may pick them up. The time frame for form completion is about two weeks. Please also make sure you complete your portion of the form prior to submitting it to our office.

**8. Insurance Company Policies:** It is understood that by purchasing a particular insurance company policy for your healthcare, you are responsible for knowing the terms and conditions of the policy. You need to know what services your insurance company will pay for and what they will not pay for. Medical Specialists Inc, accepts an overwhelming number of insurances. There is no way for us to know all the terms and conditions of every insurance policy, so it is up to the individual patient to know the terms of his or her own policy. If you have any questions about this, there is an 800 number on the back of your insurance card. All you need to do is call the 800 number and ask the customer service representative whether a particular service is covered by your plan. We do urge you to check with your insurance carrier prior to your first visit to ensure our doctor is covered by your plan.

**9. Late Policy:** If you are more than **15-min** late for an appointment you may be asked to reschedule. We do try to see patients who show up late, but unfortunately this is not always possible.

**10. Cancellation Policy:** If you schedule an appointment and are unable to keep it, please call prior to the appointment time to cancel. This allows another patient to use that time slot. We require a three-business-hour notice. Otherwise, you are considered to be a no-show.

**11. No-Show Policy:** If you cannot make it to your appointment and do not cancel, this is considered a no-show and there will be a charge.

- Telephone medicine is not safe. Mistakes in diagnosis and treatment can be made when the patient is not seen in person.
- Insurance companies do not cover telephone medicine. This means that, if you have a medical problem, you will need to make an appointment to see the healthcare provider.

**12. Prior Authorization for Prescriptions:** When you are informed by your pharmacist that your medication requires prior authorization, please have your pharmacist fax us the denial from the insurance company so we know whom to contact for prior authorization.

- We will complete the appropriate prior authorization forms or call the insurance company. Please understand that the prior authorization process can take up to two weeks. When the pharmacist tells you, "Just have your doctor call this number and the insurance company will authorize the medication," please understand that it's

not that simple. Insurance companies will generally authorize an expensive medication only if you have tried all the less costly medications for your condition.

- Sometimes, the doctor will require that you come in to discuss the matter in person. This could happen for several reasons:
  - The insurance company wants to know what other medications you have tried, for how long, and the results (for example, they didn't work or they caused side effects).
  - The insurance company requires documentation AT A PATIENT VISIT of the prior medications tried. A simple phone call tells us what you've tried is not sufficient.
  - The prior authorization may have been denied, in which case the doctor may need to see you in order to prescribe a covered medication. Sometimes such a determination is not something that can be done over the phone. For example, possible side effects may need to be discussed, or drug monitoring lab tests may need to be ordered. Our doctors make every effort at the time of the patient visit to prescribe medications which will be covered by your insurance plan. To minimize the need for prior authorization, you may want to obtain a copy of your insurance company's formulary and bring it with you to every doctor visit.
  - A potential fee can be assessed for medication authorization.

**13. Narcotic Refills:** With a few exceptions, refills for controlled substances (such as opiates and sedatives) are only made in person. This is required by Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) guidelines.

Thank you for your understanding.