

Welcome to Centro Medical!

I hope that this letter will be helpful to inform you of the practice policy at Centro Medical. As a family physician, I will be designated as your primary care physician and be most responsible for your care, if you choose to join this practice. I encourage my patients to follow-up with myself whenever possible, for both minor ailments and chronic conditions to maintain continuity of care. Please also read the attached pamphlet on *"Making the most of your family doctor visit"*, adapted from a brochure produced by the Doctors of BC, formerly known as the British Columbia Medical Association (BCMA).

Appointments

Kindly book your routine appointments ahead of time. It is helpful to inform the receptionist when calling to book an urgent appointment due to acute illness. They will make every effort to fit you in for the next available appointment. Occasionally, this may involve you seeing another physician in the clinic. I generally do not see patients on a walk-in basis, although I try to leave same-day appointment times available for patients requiring urgent medical attention. This policy ensures that my time is prioritized to patients with booked appointments.

Your time is valuable, and my goal is to stay on schedule. To help me stay on time, I encourage patients to express one major medical concern or two minor concerns per visit. Whenever possible, please tell the receptionist the reason for your visit, so they can book your appointment length appropriately. Unfortunately, there are times when unexpected events or medical emergencies occur, and you may be left waiting. I thank you in advance for your understanding and patience.

After-Hours Care / Emergency

For a medical emergency, call 911 right away or proceed to the nearest hospital. For urgent medical concerns after-hours, our phone message will instruct you on how to reach the family physician on-call. For non-urgent requests and appointment bookings, please call the receptionist during regular office hours. Please note that there may be a fee charged for non-insured after-hours services.

Cancellation Policy

We require a cancellation notice of at least 24 hours if you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment. In the event of a missed or "no-show" appointment without cancellation or without valid reason, there may be a fee charged.

Test results

If there are test results to be reviewed, the receptionist will call you specifically to book a follow-up appointment. I do recommend that you schedule a follow-up appointment to review all test results, especially if you have ongoing medical concerns. Please do not automatically assume that "no news is good news", because unfortunately, there are rare situations when our office may not have received your results.

Prescriptions and Refills

I do not give prescriptions or refills by fax or phone. All prescription refills require a scheduled visit. This is the best way to properly monitor any adverse effects of your medications and note any changes in your health status that require special attention.

Referrals

Referrals to specialists and other allied health professionals will be done only during a scheduled appointment visit. This also applies for re-referrals to specialists you have seen in the past.

Telephone Calls

If you would like to speak with a physician, please make an in-person appointment to discuss your medical concerns. Occasionally, there may be times when my receptionist or I will contact patients directly by phone to relay an important or urgent message. As a result, we ask that you inform us if there are any changes to your phone number or contact information.

Controlled medications

I do not prescribe narcotics for chronic use unless there is a clear medical indication as endorsed by a specialist (i.e. pain specialist or oncologist). Narcotics that are started and prescribed by myself will require a signed Medication Use Agreement. I do not prescribe medical marijuana.

Medical Trainees

Centro Medical is a teaching clinic. There may be times when there is a medical student or resident working in the office under my supervision. The receptionist will inform you when you arrive for your visit. Clinical encounters provide valuable learning experiences for all medical trainees. As a patient, I encourage you to provide feedback to myself to help our trainees become conscientious and competent physicians.

Uninsured Services

Please be aware that the BC Provincial Medical Services Plan does not cover all medical services. Centro Medical follows the British Columbia Medical Association guidelines in charging for uninsured services. If you are unable to pay the full fee due to financial hardship, kindly inform myself or the receptionist regarding alternative arrangements.

Some examples of uninsured services include:

- Work or school sick notes, insurance forms and letters
- Driver's Medical Examinations
- Physical fitness examinations for school, employment, summer camp, etc.
- Removal of benign skin lesions for non-medically necessary or cosmetic reasons.

Dismissal

I will make every effort to provide you with primary medical care to the best of my ability. Unfortunately, there may be rare situations when patients may be dismissed from this medical practice. If patients are dismissed from this clinic, they will be allowed a short grace period for urgent treatment in our office while they look for another family physician.

Potential reasons for dismissal include:

- Frequent no-shows without valid reason
- Persistent noncompliance with clinic policy
- Abusive or rude behaviour to any members of our staff or physicians

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Centro Medical Practice Policy.

Patient Signature: _____

Date: _____

Patient Name: _____