

PHONE CALL POLICY

Coastal Spine & Pain • 150 W Peachtree Avenue, Foley, AL 36535 • Phone: (251) 291-2311 • Fax: 1-888-894-5212

The office phone number is available to all patients for non-urgent communication with our office during office hours. However, we see a large volume of patients in our office each day and it is difficult to provide one-on-one service and still attend to a large volume of patient phone calls, so there are some guidelines we ask that you try to follow.

After hours, we ask that you limit your phone calls to urgent needs only. **After-hours calls that are determined not to be an emergency — including requests for pain medication or requests to change pain medication — may be assessed a \$25.00 administrative fee.** This fee is not billable to insurance and is the patient's responsibility.

Patients should contact the office immediately if any of the following are new or present more than 48 hours after a PROCEDURE: (1) fever greater than 101 degrees, (2) neck stiffness, (3) drainage from a procedure or surgery site, (4) weakness, numbness or tingling in arm(s) or leg(s). Call 911 for all emergencies.

Patients should also call if they are having an allergic reaction to new medication prescribed. Allergic reactions are different than medications not working or wishing to change medications due to minor issues. Call 911 for all emergencies.

The non-urgent requests include:

- » **PRESCRIPTIONS** - Requesting refills, reporting any non-urgent intolerance, minor negative side effects, or issues with your pharmacy
- » **REPORTING PROCEDURE RESULTS** – that is exactly what follow up visits are designed to accomplish.
- » **REPORTING ANY NEW OR CHANGED MEDICAL CONDITIONS** which could impact your treatment - Especially new medications from other doctors or hospital stays
- » **APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING:** View, confirm, schedule, reschedule and cancel (24-hour advance notice)
- » **ANY OTHER NON-URGENT CLINICAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS OR ISSUES**

All messages received via phone or voice mail will be reviewed and documented by the clinical staff and you will receive a return call or message directly if the clinical staff feels it is necessary.

We typically do not return phone calls to discuss imaging (MRIs or x-rays), to discuss the treatment plan or to request routine medication changes. That is what an office visit is designed to accomplish. These issues are too complex to discuss over a phone call even if insurance or federal regulations allowed us to do so which they often do not. If your procedure or medications are not working, if your pain level has changed, or if it has been greater than three months since your last visit with us then we request that you schedule a follow up visit to discuss. We will **NOT** change your pain medications **OUTSIDE OF AN OFFICE VISIT** unless previously discussed and documented.

Please remember that calling repeatedly during the day does not speed up a return call, it simply slows down our ability to efficiently and effectively attend to all of our patients' needs.

Our goal is to provide each of our patients with the best we have to offer in pain intervention. Your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines will improve the overall care we are able to provide to all of our patients.

I have read, understand and agree to this policy.

Patient or Guardian (with defined relationship) Signature**

Date

Witness by Coastal Spine & Pain Staff

Date