



## Office Policies and Procedures

### Appointments

Office appointments can always be scheduled by telephoning the office at 863-680-7578 during normal business hours (8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday – Friday). We will also do our best to facilitate any related appointments that are necessary to provide you with the most optimal care as well such as: radiology testing, laboratory studies, chemotherapy infusions, and other ancillary testing. Such arrangements can sometimes be completed before you leave the office following your visit, but some situations may require a follow up phone call to finalize all of the needed appointments. Our goal is to work around your schedule while simultaneously scheduling the needed tests as quickly as possible in a way that will allow us to have all results available by your return office visit.

If you are unable to keep any of your scheduled appointments, please notify us as soon as possible after you become aware of a conflict. We will work to get you rescheduled as quickly as possible. If you fail to arrive for an appointment, we will contact you and attempt to reschedule. Repeated missed appointments without advanced notification will be grounds for dismissal from the practice.

The approach in our office is to see everyone as soon as possible after the need becomes apparent, and this may lead to lengthier wait times in the waiting room from time to time. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience that this may cause, but we truly do believe that most patients would prefer to wait longer on the day of their appointment as opposed to waiting several weeks for the “next available” appointment. In our specialty, the anxiety that goes along with such potential scheduling delays is much more troublesome than the inconvenience of some additional wait time on the day of your visit. Please feel free to bring reading material or similar to assist you with passing any prolonged wait time. We also promise to provide each patient with all the time needed to address concerns regardless of how delayed our schedule may be.

### Patient Registration

Upon arrival for all appointments, please sign in and provide proof of insurance at the reception or check-in desk. You should be prepared to pay any co-pays, deductibles, or coinsurances at the time of service for all appointments. The reception staff will also verify your contact information at each appointment as it is important that all of your information be kept up to date as this is how we contact you for appointments, to discuss test results, etc.

### Financial Policy

We accept most major insurance plans including many HMOs and PPOs and Medicare. You may verify that your insurance will cover the cost of your visit by calling 863-680-7776. If your plan requires a co-pay, this will be collected at the time of service prior to your visit.

In the event that some type of intervention (surgery, chemotherapy, x-ray testing, etc.) is recommended, we have Financial Counselors who can provide you with an estimate of potential costs. This is so that you can be aware in advance of your potential responsibility for these services. Obviously, the precise costs of chemotherapy and/or surgery can only be determined after the service is provided; therefore any potential cost estimates provided are strictly an estimate. Most of such estimates are conservative, and any additional balance due will be billed. Any monies that have been collected in excess of your actual cost will of course be promptly refunded.

Our Patient Financial Service Representatives and Financial Counselors can discuss statement questions, your balance, billing issues, or any potential costs of recommended treatment/procedures. You may visit our Billing Office in person (located in the Bella Vista Building), schedule an appointment with the Financial Counselors at the Bella Vista Building, Main Clinic or at the Cancer & Research Center, or you may discuss your concerns via telephone; call 863-680-7206 during normal business hours (8:00 am – 4:30 pm) to schedule such appointment or to speak with a representative.

Please be aware that if you have an insurance plan with which we are not contracted or if you do not have insurance coverage, you will be responsible for payment in full prior to your appointment.

### Telephone Calls

We are available to assist you at all times. Our office is open from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday except for holidays and other rare special circumstances. Routine questions, prescription refills, and other non-urgent matters should be addressed by calling the office during normal hours. We do our best to provide a friendly voice to actually answer all calls, however on occasion we are busy with other patients and calls get forwarded to a voice mailbox. Please leave a message if you get our voice mail. We check messages continuously throughout the day, and will call you back as soon as time allows. All messages left prior to 4:00 pm will be addressed that day. Any message left after 4:00 pm may not get addressed until the following business day.

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We also have an after hours voice mail where non-urgent messages can be left after normal hours. These after hours messages will be checked the next business day and responded to at that time. This option allows you to leave us a non-urgent message when it comes to mind, even if in the middle of the night. To leave an after hours non-urgent message, call the office at 863-680-7578 and follow the instructions to access our after hours mailbox.

For emergency situations, our providers are available 24 hours per day. You can reach the on-call physician by calling the office (863-680-7578) and following the voice instructions to be forwarded to the physician's answering service. The answering service will locate the on-call provider for you. We ask that you please be respectful of the doctor's time away from the office and limit such after hours calls to those that are truly urgent or when you believe that it may not be safe to wait until the office opens again to have your concern addressed. For example, prescription refills for hormones (or similar medications) or problems with constipation are most often not an emergency, whereas a patient on chemotherapy with a fever or unrelenting nausea and vomiting certainly warrants an after hours call to the on-call physician. If you are unsure, you should always call; we would rather be telephoned and not really needed than be really needed but not called. In the event that you have placed a call to our on-call physician for an urgent matter and do not receive a response within 30 minutes, please call again and continue calling until a response is received to avoid an unintended oversight.

### **Prescriptions**

If you need a prescription refill, please contact the office during normal business hours. We can telephone most refills into your pharmacy, but you will be asked to provide us with the phone number to be certain there is no confusion about which location the prescription will be filled. If approved by the doctor, all telephone refill requests received by our office before 4:00 pm will be called in on the same day. Refill requests after 4:00 pm will not be available until the following business day.

Please keep in mind that the doctor is not available to approve refill requests while in surgery. Therefore, any prescription refills that require specific input from the physician may not be available for 24-48 hours, and Friday requests may not be available until Monday. In other words, do not wait until you have completely run out of medication prior to requesting a necessary refill; you should notify us at least 3 days in advance so that you do not risk going without medication due to these aforementioned circumstances. If there is likely to be a delay, we will of course let you know and explain the reason for such delay in getting your prescription medication refilled.

Not all prescriptions can be refilled by telephone due to state and federal regulations. Many pain medications for example require a written prescription. Keep this in mind as you near the end of your pain prescriptions. We need 3 days advance notice to be certain that we can obtain appropriate physician signatures and then have the prescription available for you to pick up.

Hormone replacement, contraceptive medications, and other medications that are typically prescribed with a one-year supply will require a visit with the office prior to a refill being authorized. Under extenuating circumstances, we may be able to provide an additional 30-day supply to provide ample opportunity for you to schedule such an appointment.

We are not able to provide prescription refills for prescriptions written by other providers, for medical conditions managed by other clinicians, or for situations not directly related to your care through our office.

### **Medical Records Request and Insurance/Leave Form Completion**

All forms pertaining to disability, insurance, medical leave, etc. must be completed by our Release of Information department. This assures their accuracy and completeness (with all requested records, etc.). Please take all such forms by the 1 West Main Entrance Information Desk on the first floor. These forms will be completed and then reviewed and signed by your doctor. The forms can then be forwarded to the appropriate party or returned to you personally. Our aim is to have these forms completed within 72 hours; however, depending on the nature of the form and the volume of requested records, additional time may be required.

### **Office Traffic**

Our exam rooms are somewhat limited on space, so we only have room for one or two family members/friends to be present during the history and physical examination portions of your visit. For any treatment discussions or recommendations however, we will gladly accommodate as many as possible as it is our desire for everyone's concerns to be adequately addressed by the conclusion of your visit. Please be sure and make us aware of any individuals in the waiting room that you would like to be present for these discussions.

### **Test Results**

We prefer to discuss all test results (operative pathology reports, office biopsy results, CT scan results, ultrasound results, etc.) in person. This assures the privacy of your health information and allows true face-to-face time with the provider to be sure all of your questions are answered to your satisfaction. We do make exceptions for routine test results (Pap smear, blood work, etc.) for those patients who are well established with the office.

## **WATSON CLINIC<sub>LLP</sub>**

*Your Central Florida Center for Gynecologic Cancer Care*

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