

# Contemporary Family Medicine Associates

## Important Patient Announcement & Practice Policies

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To ensure you receive the best possible care, please review and understand our updated practice policies below. These guidelines help us provide timely, efficient, and organized care while fostering effective communication and a positive experience for all patients.

### 1. Appointment Policies

- **Timeliness:** Please arrive on time for all scheduled appointments. This gives the best chance for our providers to see you in a timely manner. When our providers run behind, it is because of the needs of a prior patient. We will always do our best to notify you of a longer than expected wait.
- **Late Arrivals:** Patients arriving more than 15 minutes late will need to reschedule their appointment and pay a no-show fee. If you are running late, please call the office right away.
- **Cancellations & Rescheduling:** Appointments canceled or rescheduled without at least 24 hours' notice will incur a no-show fee (\$100 for Wellness visits, \$50 for any other visit). Repeated cancellations or no-shows may result in discontinuation of care.
- **Insurance Updates:** Please update and upload your insurance into the online check-in system to prevent delays. We require a physical copy of the front and back of your insurance card at your visit.
- **Forms & Letters:** Completion of forms and letters requires an office visit.

### 2. Appointment Purpose & Disclosure

- **Reason for Visit:** Patients are required to inform staff of the reason for their visit at the time of scheduling.
- **Disclosing Concerns:** To ensure sufficient time is allocated, all concerns to be addressed during the appointment must be disclosed. If your concerns change prior to your visit, please call us so we can allocate appropriate time.

### 3. Medication Policies

- **Refill Requests:** Please request refills at least 5 days in advance for local pharmacies and 14 days for mail-order. Refills should first be requested through your pharmacy. Same-day approvals are not guaranteed. Controlled substance refills always require an office visit.
- **New Medications:** All new medication requests require an office visit.
- **Annual Visit Requirement:** Patients must be seen by a provider at least once annually to continue receiving medications. If more than 365 days have passed, a single short-term courtesy refill may be provided if a follow-up appointment is scheduled.

### 4. Payment Policies

- **Co-Payments:** Due before you are seen (preferably during online check-in, or upon arrival at the office).
- **Card on File:** A card on file is now required for payments so staff can focus on clinical care. Additional details will be shared in a separate correspondence.
- **Unpaid Balances:** Balances unpaid after one month will be sent to collections. Payment plans are available upon request—please call us to discuss options.

### 5. Portal & Communication Policies

- **Family Members:** Please use the family member's own portal account or call the office. Messages sent from your personal account on behalf of someone else cannot be accommodated.
- **New Questions & Illnesses:** The portal is not intended for new medical questions or recurring illness consultations. These require an office visit, and using the portal for them will delay your care.
- **Provider-Initiated Follow-ups:** Portal messaging is appropriate for follow-up messages requested by your provider (e.g., updating Dr. Lucas on symptoms after 72 hours). Note that portal messages are not monitored 24/7 or on weekends/holidays.

### 6. Provider-Specific Scheduling

- **Dr. Lucas:** Patients preferring to see Dr. Lucas should schedule at least 3–4 weeks in advance due to high demand.
- **Allison Stern, PA-C:** Same-day acute sick visits and follow-up appointments are available with Allison Stern, PA-C. All patient visits are reviewed with Dr. Lucas to formulate your care plan.

## 7. Referrals & Prior Authorizations

- **Referrals:** An office visit is required before any specialist referrals can be issued.
- **Prior Authorizations:** Authorizations for radiology and medications take time and depend on insurance approval. For prescriptions, alternative options like GoodRx or contacting insurance directly for non-formulary forms may be recommended.

### A Note on Healthcare Challenges

We are all aware of the challenges facing our healthcare system—deductibles, billing, prior authorizations, increasing premiums, and coverage decreases. At Contemporary Family Medicine Associates, we are committed to providing the best care possible. While we cannot control outside entities and policies, we greatly appreciate your understanding and patience as we navigate these obstacles together.

To Good Health,

CFMA Staff