



PINNACLE FAMILY MEDICINE APPOINTMENT POLICY

Our office is open Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. We are closed for lunch from 12:00 – 1:00. During periods of inclement weather our office normally monitors the Johnson City School System's schedule to determine our hours. If the J.C. School System is on a regular schedule our office will be on a regular schedule. If the Johnson City School System is closed our office may be closed. If the Johnson City School System is on a delayed schedule, our office will normally open at 10:00 am. Any changes to our office hours will be posted on our website at www.sofha.net. If you do not have internet access, please call our office to determine if we are open.

Appointments are scheduled beginning at 8:10 am and our final patient appointment is 4:10 pm. In order for our physicians to provide the best health care possible, **patients are seen by appointment only**. Since there are several issues that must be considered, including staffing and scheduling, the physicians made the decision not to see patients who walk in without an appointment. Our schedule does allow for a certain number of "work ins" but once that quota has been met we have no choice but to refer you to State of Franklin Healthcare's Walk-In clinic or if necessary to the nearest emergency department.

If you have an illness, please call the office for an appointment time. It is the policy of this office to see patients with urgent needs the same day they call in; unfortunately this is not always possible. If a patient cannot be worked in, our staff will take a message, or check with the physician, if the physician feels it is necessary for the patient to be seen that day, we will refer to the walk-in clinic. If the matter is something that can wait a day or two, then we will try to work the patient in within 48 hours. Preventive and routine office visits are scheduled within 4-6 weeks of the patient calling in.

ALLERGY SHOTS, ROUTINE INJECTIONS and LAB DRAWS

Due to staffing issues, patients that need to come in for allergy shots, routine injections or lab work must call and schedule an appointment with the nurse. It is not feasible for the patient to "stop by" when they are ready for the injection or labs to be drawn.

CANCELLATION POLICY

A 24-hour cancellation notice is required for all patients. An appointment that is not kept, or cancelled in advance, prevents another patient from being seen that day. With a 24-hour advance notice, we can free the time for another patient. Otherwise, the individual will need to be referred to the walk-in clinic or their local emergency department for treatment.

If you do not call our office to cancel and/or reschedule your appointment it will be marked as a "No Show". Established patients with three (3) documented missed appointments in a twelve month period are subject to discharge from this practice. In addition you may be required to pay a fee of \$20.00 for a missed appointment. Your insurance company does not cover this fee; it is your responsibility.

If you are a new patient scheduled for your first appointment to become established and you do not call 24-hours in advance to cancel and reschedule your appointment, you may not be eligible to reschedule at a later date.

REFERRAL POLICY

As primary care physicians it is our privilege to care for your healthcare needs. However, at times a condition/illness will require you to be referred to a specialist for further treatment. We will gladly schedule the appointment for you, complete a referral form and obtain approval from your insurance company for the number of visits indicated by your condition.

If you need a referral to a specialist for a condition/illness we have not treated you for, then you will need to schedule an appointment for an examination with your physician of records. Contractual agreements with the insurance companies will not allow us to refer you to a specialist without first treating you for the condition/illness.

As you are aware all referrals are for a specific number of visits and/or a specified time frame. As the patient, it is your responsibility to notify us when a new referral is required whether as a result of the number of visits being exhausted or time expiration. When requesting a renewal of your original referral to a specialist we require you to notify us at least five (5) business days before the referral is needed. Due to rules of your insurance company, we must notify them in advance of your appointment, document the need for your continual treatment by the specialist and then wait for them to approve the renewal. Therefore, **requests for referrals without a 5-business day notice will not be honored**. Unfortunately this may result in your having to reschedule your appointment with the specialist.

PRESCRIPTION POLICY

Patients should discuss their prescription needs with the physician at the time of their office visit. However, should an instance arise when you will be running out of your medication before you are scheduled to return to our office for follow up, we require you to call our office 48-hours in advance of running out of the medication. **Do not wait until you are completely out of your medication to request refills.**

Upon receiving your telephone call a message will be sent back to your physician of record. Prescription refill requests may not be addressed the same day you call in. Due to physician schedules it may take up to 48 hours for your prescription need to be addressed. If there is a problem with the refill request a nurse will call you back. Otherwise, **please check with your pharmacy after 5:00 pm the day you need your prescription.** **Routine callbacks from the nurse or physician to inform you that your prescription is ready will not be made.**

Please have the following information ready when you call in for a prescription refill:

- Name and strength of drug.
- Pharmacy name, location and phone number.
- Date medication is needed.

If you do not have all of this information when requesting your medication, you may be instructed to obtain the needed information and then call us back with your request.

NARCOTICS REQUESTED AFTER NORMAL OFFICE HOURS WILL NOT BE HONORED.