

San Antonio Arthritis Care Centers

R_x PRESCRIPTION REFILL POLICY

Currently our office receives a large volume of calls daily for medication refill requests. Our office tries diligently to manage this volume of phone requests. In January 2013 we transitioned to the following refill policy. Our goal is to fill every prescription during your visit, but inevitably there are those that expire prior to the next appointment. When that occurs, the most important thing is to allow us enough time to process your request so that you do not run out of medications.

Goals: The goals of this policy are to ensure timeliness of refills AND reduce high phone call volume. We will accomplish this while maintaining good clinical practice oversight and safety of high risk medications.

General Principle: The safest clinical practice is for all prescriptions to be filled during a scheduled office visit. This permits discussion of any potentially adverse events/side effects, and allows for the physician to assess clinical efficacy of the medication, and determine if continued use is medically justified. In addition, any needed lab monitoring can be accomplished and any special forms required by the insurer or specialty pharmacy can be completed.

New Refill Procedures:

1. It is very important that you monitor your prescriptions and anticipate when refills will be needed.
2. If you have enough to last until your next appointment, then you will be provided with refills at that time. No call in is necessary and the pharmacy does not need to fax us a refill request.
3. Bring all your currently prescribed medication bottles or a current medication list with you to each appointment, and know which medications need to be refilled. Your doctor will not have time to look this up during your visit. **You are expected to know what you are taking and why.**
4. **If you do not have enough medication to last until your next appointment:** By carefully monitoring your medication and the number of refills left, you should anticipate and schedule an appointment in order to avoid this situation.
 - a. If the medication is a controlled substance, an appointment will be needed. Call to schedule an earlier appointment. If necessary a limited prescription may be provided to last until the scheduled appointment.
 - b. If the medication is a high risk DMARD or Biologic agent, an appointment will be needed. Call to schedule an earlier appointment. If necessary, a limited prescription may be provided to last until the scheduled appointment.
 - c. If the medication is neither a controlled nor a high-risk medication, and you will run out prior to your next scheduled appointment, then contact the pharmacy that fills the prescription and ask them to fax us a refill request. It is important that you do this at least one week prior to needing the refill, and allow our office 2 business days to process the request. Note that your doctor may only prescribe enough to cover you until your next appointment. **You will be notified when the request has been filled.**

- No prescriptions will be refilled on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays or Holidays.
- Prescription pick-up: Monday-Thursday during business hours ONLY (9am-4:30pm).
- Allow **2 business days** to process prescriptions(s) renewal faxed from your pharmacy. If request is received after 3PM, the processing will not start until the following business day.
- Staff will notify patient when prescription request has been processed by the doctor.
- No early refills. Patient is responsible for knowing when refills will be needed.
- Refills should be requested through your pharmacy.
- Refills will not be authorized if required lab tests are overdue.

*** NOTE: During normal business hours, physicians are inaccessible except for emergencies while providing care for scheduled clinic patients***

- New symptoms/events may require an appointment. Doctor cannot diagnose/treat via phone.
- Signed “Controlled Substance Agreement” required if using narcotic/controlled medications.
- Medication/prescription lost, stolen, misplaced, or overused will require appointment.
- Patient must agree to keep medications in a secured place to prevent loss, theft or misuse.
- Medications are for the prescribed individual to use only. It is illegal to “share” medications.
- Patient must pick up his/her prescription(s) in person, unless pre-authorized by the doctor.

We strive to offer the best services and care for each patient in a timely manner. The above protocol is essential and necessary to efficiently manage a busy clinic. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding - The SAACC Team.