

South Of The Bay Family Practice

Notice To Patients Of Dr. Smith and Dr. McLachlin Fee For Prescriptions Without Visit

May 8, 2024

Effective June 1, 2024

**There will be a \$20 fee for prescriptions without a visit
for Dr. Smith and Dr. McLachlin patients.**

Please know that the primary purpose is not to collect revenue from patients but to decrease the tremendous administrative burden of avoidable prescription requests.

Alternatively, patients will always be offered an OHIP covered “Prescription Renewal Visit” prior to medications coming due.

How Can You Help?

How can you help reduce the administrative burden of prescription renewals?

1. Bring all your medications to every appointment for review. The bottles/blister packs are best but a list of your current medications from the pharmacy would also be helpful.
2. If you have a booked appointment please check your medications to see if any require renewals so that they can be completed at your appointment.
3. If a specialist adds a new medication please let us know. Often communication from specialist is delayed and our lists are not always up to date.
4. If you decide to stop a medication on your own (not recommended) please inform the doctor’s office.
5. Please check your medications regularly and notify us ASAP if you are getting to the end of your prescriptions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Will I be able to make an appointment for my renewals?

A: For patients who need a simple Prescription Renewal Visit, the goal is to guarantee an appointment before the patient's medications are due, providing the patient has followed our policy of allowing **5-14 BUSINESS DAYS** for any prescription request.

Q: What if the available appointment offered to me does not work with my schedule?

A: If we offer appointment options, but the patient declines them, that is the patients choice and a fee is still applicable if the patient requests a renewal without a visit.

Q: Can I Still get a prescription without a visit?

A: If you would like the physicians to send in a prescription without an appointment, it must be a medication that you are already taking, and a \$20 charge will apply. You can expect your refill within 5-14 business days and you will receive an invoice from PatientSERV by email or mail. If you require an urgent prescription renewal, to be done during business hours, within a few hours of request, an additional \$10 rush fee will apply.

Prescription renewals are covered for patients who are a member of the clinic plan through PatientSERV. An extra \$5 rush fee still applies if needed in less than 5 business days.

Q: What if I need by renewal in less than 5 business days?

A: To obtain a rush prescription request, please call the office at 705-445-2311 ex. 1 between 9am and 4pm Monday-Thursday. You will be required to pay \$30 (\$25 for annual plan members) through PatientSERV for this service.

Q: Can I still ask my pharmacy to renew my medication?

A: Now that fees apply to the patient, it must be the patient who initiates the request and agrees to the fee. We will no longer accept prescription requests from pharmacies.

Patient's will be required to contact our office for prescriptions renewals.

Q: If I need more than one medication renewed do I have to pay for each medication?

A: Multiple medications on a single prescription request count as only one. For example, if a patient requests 5 medications at once, the fee is \$20 (not \$100).

If a patient calls in for a medication one day, and then again the next day (or even a few hours later), that counts as 2 separate requests, \$20 each.

Q: Are there any exceptions?

The Physicians will make exceptions on a case by case basis and waive/reduce the fee in special circumstances, such as:

- Frail, elderly, patients, or those with dementia, who cannot easily come in for a visit.
- Patients with severe financial strain (but even they have the option of coming in for a visit).
- Urinary Tract Infection (urine sample must be provided by patient prior to prescription of antibiotics).
- Patients on Warfarin (Coumadin) (see below).
- Patients who cannot be offered a Prescription Renewal Visit before their medication is due because of lack of physician availability.

Exemptions may simply be one-time only. For instance, Physicians might waive the fee for a patient one month, but three months later, they may need to see that same patient in person for assessment so that patient should come in for a visit, not renew over phone.

Q: What if I am on Warfarin and need regular dose changes?

- Warfarin prescriptions will be exempt from the fee.
- The rationale here is that patients may frequently require dose changes, which is not within their control and repeated visits to reassess a simple dose change are not medically necessary.