

“Office Policies and Procedures Effective 1/1/2006”

These policies are in place to minimize administrative problems and burdens and maximize patient **medical care**. The staff is not responsible for these policies nor are they authorized to change them. For the most part these policies are the result of managed care and Medicare and are beyond the control of the physician:

- You need three items with you on **the day of your visit**: a *photo ID*, your *current* insurance card, and a *method to pay* your copay or deductible (cash, check or CC).
- Please give *24 hours* notice **if your insurance has changed**. The staff needs to verify benefits before you can be seen. (“tag-along” patients without an appointment *can not be accommodated* for this reason),
- **The doctor will not** modify or incorrectly code claims to get cosmetic procedures covered; write prescriptions in another person’s name because they have a drug plan and the patient doesn’t; waive copays or deductibles; or otherwise engage in fraudulent, illegal or questionable behavior *regardless if another doctor has done or does these things for you*.
- It is **Medicare fraud** (*on your part*) if you present your Medicare card as primary when you know you are covered by a Medicare HMO (Choice+ plan, etc.)
- **Multiple procedure rules** grossly reduce or deny payment for performing multiple or mixing types of procedures done on the same day. In essence, managed care companies try to minimize their cash flow by restricting you from receiving comprehensive care in one visit. *These restrictions are beyond the control of the physician*.
- **Prescription refill policy**: Dr. Goodless will **no longer fill telephone refill requests for prescriptions written after 1/1/06**. These prescriptions have been written to allow the maximum number of refills the physicians feels comfortable giving without having to assess your condition or review or test for side effects. **Please keep your follow up appointments and plan ahead to avoid being without your medication**. In any case, prescription refills after one year are illegal. Our policy is *more restrictive* than that mandated by law.
- **The Florida Board of Medicine prohibits** doctors for prescribing for a condition for which they have not been consulted. If the problem was *not addressed during your office visit*, the physician *can not* call in a prescription later.
- **Established patient with an urgent problem**: If the receptionist can not schedule your appointment in the very near future, *please leave a message for the medical assistant* to see if your problem is serious enough to be worked-in emergently.
- **Dr. Goodless running late**: Because we do not overbook, this seldom happens, but when it does, it is likely because a surgery took longer than anticipated (bleeding/fainting), or a patient was worked in as an emergency (shingles/abcess). **You** won’t be rushed when you see the doctor and your patience is appreciated.
- **Late appointments**: For an office visit, if you are late, we will try to accommodate you, however *there is no fixed amount of time you may be required to wait* because on-time patients will be accommodated first. If you choose to wait, you understand and agree to wait until an opening becomes available. If you are more than 15 minutes late for a **surgery**, you may be asked to reschedule.
- All Cosmetic procedures require a deposit of 50% of the anticipated charges at the time of booking which will be forfeited if the patient is a “no show” for that appointment.

- If you “**no show**” for two office visit appointments, *it is mutually agreed that you have discharged Dr. Goodless as your physician and any legal obligations he may have to provide medical care to you.*
- **Surgeries are not done on the day of your first visit.** These procedures take 30-60 minutes and can not be “squeezed into” your office visit. Dr. Goodless must consult with you in order to schedule the appropriate surgical appointment. This is true regardless of what a referring physician or their office staff may have told you. In some cases, authorization beyond that obtained for your office visit is needed.
- **Copies of Medical Records:** Your medical fees cover the cost of *maintaining, but not copying* your records. **Florida statutes set the fees for copies of records** at \$1 per page for the first 20 pages and .25 per page thereafter. Records are sent via first class mail. Please allow 1-2 weeks for processing and delivery.
- **Refunds of Credit Balances:** Because we deal with hundreds of insurance companies and they each process and price claims differently, it is logistically impractical to ensure that we collect the *exact* amount from you for your deductible at the time of visit. As such, after your insurance processes your claim, you may be entitled to a refund of any difference. You will typically receive an “*explanation of benefits*” from your managed care company indicating that a refund is due you about two weeks before they send us a check. We issue refund checks within thirty days of receiving payment from your managed care company. If you need an expedited refund, fax us your *explanation of benefits* and call the office to request and expedited refund.
- **Check Processing:** We process your checks electronically whether you present them in person or by mail. You will receive your check back and the amount will be deducted directly from your account. We charge \$20.00 or the maximum amount allowed by law for bounced checks. After one bounced check, we require payment by cash, money order or credit card for all future payments.
- **Insurance Forms:** We only process insurance for those companies with which we are **contracted**. Some patients have second or third policies such as **AFLAC, or “cancer” policies** for which they would like us fill out a claim form. *This form is completed by the doctor and requires a review of the chart and billing records.* For this reason, like most doctors offices, **we charge a flat fee of \$25.00 to fill out these claim forms** which can be submitted with the form. Forms will be completed within 1 week.
- **Office paperwork:** For the most part, the numerous forms we request you to fill out or sign are *mandated by third-party payors or the federal government.* For this reasons, we require that you do not modify or make any changes to these forms. The staff is not authorized to make changes to the forms.
- **Courtesy:** Every staff member as well as the physician tries to treat each and every patients as we wish to be treated when we ourselves see our own doctors – *we also have to fill out forms, pay deductibles, and sometimes wait a long time to see our physicians.* Some patients have been less than understanding so please be advised that shouting at the staff, calling the staff derogatory names, or using profanity whether in person or on the phone will get patients *discharged from this practice.*

Thank you for reviewing this form and your understanding. We are glad you are here.

Dean R. Goodless, M.D. and all the office staff at Dermatology and Skin Surgery Center, PA