

SOUTHERN MEDICAL GROUP, P.A.

1300 Medical Drive • Tallahassee, FL 32308

PLEASE KEEP THIS SHEET FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

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WELCOME TO SOUTHERN MEDICAL GROUP (SMG)!

We are pleased that you have chosen SMG physicians to provide your health care and we are committed to patient service. The following information is intended to assist you in successfully managing your health care needs.

Appointment Tips: Please call our office at the number listed above so that we can schedule a visit appropriate to your needs. It is necessary that your doctor knows about ALL the medicines you are taking. **Please bring all medicines with you to your appointment.** It is also helpful if you bring a problem list with you.

“Work-in” Appointments: If you require an unscheduled or “work-in” appointment, you will be seen by the available physician, nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant as soon as possible. However, please understand that you may have to wait for an extended period of time as there are usually other scheduled patients waiting also. If you do not feel well enough to sit in the waiting room, please tell the receptionist.

Late Arrivals and Cancellations: If you arrive late for an appointment, you may have to be rescheduled. If you cannot keep an appointment, please be considerate and call to cancel your appointment.

Telephone Calls: Our nurses make every effort to return phone calls the same day they are received. If your call has not been returned by 4 p.m., please call again. If you have an emergency, please make this clear to the receptionist and the nurse will be paged.

Insurance: SMG participates with most insurance products available in this area, although there are several different plans under each insurance company’s umbrella of products. It is your responsibility to confirm with your insurance company whether your particular plan is covered at SMG. Additionally, when we refer you to another physician or diagnostic facility, we will make every attempt to choose one that accepts your insurance plan, but it is your ultimate responsibility to confirm whether your particular plan is covered by these facilities.

Capital Health Plan: If an SMG physician is your primary care physician (PCP) for CHP, you must call our office for an authorization to see any other physician. In most cases, your PCP must see you before a referral is made. Allow 5 days for CHP to process your referral.

Transportation Assistance: There are escorts and wheelchairs available.

After-hours Care: SMG physicians are available 24 hours every day, including weekends and holidays. When possible, please call the doctor on call *before* going to an emergency facility. This often shortens the waiting time if you must be seen in the Emergency Room. If you place an emergency call after hours or on weekends, make your situation clear to the answering service. If you place a non-emergency call and have not received a return call within 2 hours, please call again.

Prescription Refills: Routine prescriptions will be refilled through your pharmacy. Call your prescription number to your pharmacist who will then call our office. **Please allow 48 hours for us to refill prescriptions.** If you urgently need a refill, please notify your pharmacist. Prescriptions for pain and sleep will only be refilled by your doctor. These medications usually will not be refilled after hours or on weekends. If you have questions about a medication, please call our office and leave a message for the nurse.

Lab Results: After you have blood drawn, the results will be reviewed by your doctor. If the results require urgent attention, you will be notified by telephone immediately. **If the results are normal, you usually will be notified within 2-3 weeks.** Please do not call the office for lab results before that time.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH MAINTENANCE

1. We uniformly advise a “no smoking” policy for all our patients. At your request, we will be glad to advise you on smoking cessation aids and programs available.
2. If alcohol is consumed, it should be limited to 2 ounces or 2 beers per day.
3. Regular exercise has tremendous health benefits – an aerobic activity (including brisk walking) for 30 minutes at least 3 to 4 times per week is advisable unless contraindicated by other medical conditions.
4. A low-fat, low-cholesterol, relatively low-sugar diet is suggested for all patients. Excess fats and sugar contribute to many health problems. An appointment with a registered dietitian is available upon request.
5. Excessive sun exposure is a major risk factor in Florida. We recommend sun screens and occlusive hats and clothing as well as sun avoidance during peak sun exposure hours.
6. We strongly recommend seat belt use as it has been shown to reduce the risk of serious injury.
7. A pneumovax, or “pneumonia shot”, is recommended for all those not previously vaccinated by age 65. Certain patients with chronic diseases or lung problems should have these sooner. (Not recommended if allergic to eggs.)
8. Yearly flu shots are suggested for all patients and strongly recommended for those age 65 or older (earlier if chronic illnesses). These are generally available on a walk-in basis (no appointment necessary) and are given from October through January. (Also not recommended if allergic to eggs.)
9. Tetanus boosters are recommended every 10 years.

CANCER SCREENING GUIDELINES

- A. FOR ALL PATIENTS – History and physical: Age 20-40 years (every 3 years); over 40 years (yearly)
 1. Colorectal cancer screening: Fecal occult blood test and digital rectal exam (yearly after age 40)
 2. Sigmoidoscopy: Age 50 and over (recommended every 3-5 years)
 3. Vision and glaucoma screening: Over age 40 (screening every 2 years), over age 60 (screen yearly)
- B. FOR WOMEN
 1. Pap smear / pelvic exam: Yearly
 2. Breast self-examination: Every month
 3. Mammograms: Baseline at age 35; Annually at age 40 and older
 4. Women should inquire as to their candidacy for calcium / hormone replacement therapy.
- C. FOR MEN
 1. Prostate exam: Over age 40 (yearly exam with digital rectal exam)
 2. PSA blood test: Begin no later than age 50, and then yearly.
 3. All men should learn self testicular exam: Monthly