

Office Policy

About My Practice

My goal is to provide superior healthcare by providing open and easy access, by fostering a deep and personal doctor-patient relationship, and by creating, promoting and implementing medical practices that are technologically advanced and financially stable.

My practice focuses on discussing all of your health concerns. To maximize the time we can spend together to do this, I choose to see a limited number of patients in my practice.

Scheduling Appointments

I can almost always see you on the same day or the next day that you call for an appointment. In general, I see patients by appointment only. I can see patients on a walk-in basis depending on availability. There are 3 ways to make an appointment:

1. Call my office at 626-441-3298.
2. Send me an e-mail message at drgaryseto@me.com.
3. Schedule your own appointment online via my web site: www.drgaryseto.com.

My regular office hours are posted on my website and subject to change without notice.

I can also schedule appointments on weekends or holidays, if my schedule permits. I may charge an extra fee for services provided outside of regular office hours.

House Calls

I make home visits depending on need and availability. Some insurance plans will reimburse for house calls, while others may not pay for the visit unless the house call is felt to be medically necessary. The service area for house calls is within a 2 mile radius from my office. I may be able to travel farther depending on the situation.

Late or Missed Appointments

From time to time, unforeseen circumstances can arise that may prevent you from keeping your appointment. In order to handle this situation fairly to all concerned, if you are late for an appointment, I will see patients who have shown up for their appointments on time first, and then see you at the first available opportunity.

If you call to cancel an appointment at least 30 minutes before the appointment, there will be no penalty.

If you miss an appointment more than once without notifying me first, I will charge you a \$25 No Show Fee.

If you miss an appointment without prior notification a 3rd time or more, I may decide to terminate my relationship with you as your physician.

Telephone Calls

Because I have no receptionist, my voice mail takes messages for me when I am seeing a patient or if I am out of the office. If you leave me a message, I will call you back as soon as possible, usually within 2 hours. When leaving a message, please leave your first and last name, a phone number you can be reached at, and the purpose of your call.

You can also call me on my cellphone, but keep in mind that I may be conducting an examination with another patient when you call. As a courtesy to my other patients, please do not call me on my cellphone unless it is something that cannot wait. As a courtesy to me and my family, **please do not call me after 9PM or before 8AM unless it is an urgent matter.**

In case of any life-threatening emergency, do not call me! Instead you should always call 911 or go to the closest hospital for any medical emergency.

Ordinarily there is no charge for brief telephone calls. But I may charge for telephone consultations in which a new problem is discussed or medication is prescribed; more than 5 telephone calls/month; or for calls lasting longer than 5 minutes. In these cases, my fee for telephone calls would be \$30 per call.

E-mail

My e-mail policy is included in a separate form. Due to federal privacy regulations, if you wish to communicate with me by e-mail, you need to sign a consent form stating that you understand that e-mail is not confidential and that you give me permission to communicate with you by e-mail.

Ordinarily there is no charge for brief e-mails. However I reserve the right to charge for e-mail consultations in which a new problem is discussed or medication is prescribed; frequent or lengthy e-mail messages. In these cases, my fee for e-mail messages is \$30 per message. For lengthy e-mail messages that require a lot of time for me to compose a response, I will charge \$50 per 15 minutes of physician time.

Text Messages

Although many people find text messages convenient, they are not private or confidential. In addition, due to the limited length of most text messages, it is often difficult to convey accurate

and complete information. Therefore I discourage patients from texting me for medical questions, and prefer to communicate with patients by either e-mail or phone.

Prescription Refills

If you need a refill from me for a prescription medication that you take on a daily or continuous basis, please contact the pharmacy first. They will either fill the prescription or contact my office to request an authorization. If I have not seen you within the past year, I will ask you to schedule an appointment with me in order to continue getting medication refills.

If you need a refill for a prescription medication that you do not take regularly, I will probably need to see you first, especially if it has been more than one year since I last saw you. I will not prescribe or refill antibiotics without an evaluation first.

Except for a few situations, I will not prescribe new medications over the telephone. For medicolegal reasons, I usually need to evaluate you first whenever I write a new prescription.

Vacations and After Hours Call

When I am out of the office, I will either forward my calls to my cell phone or monitor my voice mail several times a day. For extended absences, I will provide contact information for a qualified physician or urgent care facility which will be available to assist you in the event of an urgent need.

Insurance Plans

I am currently accepting insurance from the following health plans: Blue Cross PPO, Blue Shield PPO, Aetna PPO, Cigna PPO and Great West PPO. If you have insurance coverage with another health plan, some plans will reimburse you for seeing an out-of-network provider.

I do not participate in any HMO plans, Medicare or Medi-Cal for payment of any medical services. If you have Medicare and want to receive medical services from me, we will have to sign a Medicare Private Contract.

It is **your responsibility** to know the details of your insurance coverage by checking with your employer, insurance agent, or other appropriate person. It is **your responsibility** to notify me of any changes in your medical coverage.

Fees

My fee schedule is available upon request and a partial fee schedule with my most common charges is posted online at my website. For patients **with insurance**, reimbursements by health plans vary according to a contracted fee schedule with each respective health plan. It is the responsibility of each patient to understand what your individual health plan will and will not cover. I cannot guarantee that your insurance plan will pay for the entire cost of your visit.

My practice provides many benefits for which some practices charge much higher fees for or do not provide at all, such as:

- same day or next day appointments
- online appointment scheduling
- 24/7 access to physician via cellphone or e-mail
- extended time for physician visits
- availability of home visits

These services are not paid for by medical insurance plans or doctor visit fees. Therefore to pay for these non-covered services, **all patients** are charged a Non-Covered Benefits Membership Fee that varies depending on patient age and date of enrollment. For new patients, this fee must be paid at the initial visit. This fee may be paid at one time or spread over recurring payments. Recurring payments can only be done via a credit or debit card.

This Non-Covered Benefits Membership Fee applies to all patients regardless of medical insurance status, and one-time payments will apply to the period from January 1st through December 31st of each calendar year.

Methods of Payment

I accept cash, personal checks, debit and credit cards (VISA, Mastercard and American Express), or mobile payment methods (eg. Apple Pay, Android Pay, PayPal) as payment.

For patients without health insurance, payment in full is expected at the time of service.

For patients with health insurance, I am required to collect any copayments as specified by your health plan at the time of the service. If you write me a check that is not honored by my bank, I will pass on to you any bank charges incurred and assess a \$25 Returned Check Fee.

My policy for paying your balance, late payments and non-payment is explained in my Office Financial Policy. If you have any financial difficulty making a payment, please contact me to make financial arrangements.

Arbitration

My goal is to provide superb medical care and communication in a way that avoids disputes. However, in the event of a dispute, I believe that binding arbitration is a fairer way to resolve disputes than malpractice court. Arbitration agreements between physicians and patients have long been recognized and approved by the California courts. Therefore, it is mandatory for patients in my practice to sign an arbitration agreement prior to being accepted as a patient. You have the right not to sign the arbitration agreement, just as I have a right to decline you as a patient if you choose not to agree to binding arbitration.

Confidentiality and Its Limits

Our discussions are strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone without your express permission given in writing to me. There are, however, certain exceptions that you should know about:

1. I must report suspected cases of child abuse both to the police and to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Public Social Services.
2. I must report spousal abuse and elder abuse to the police.
3. I may need to report you to public safety officers if I feel that you may be in imminent danger of harming yourself or others.
4. I am obligated to attempt to warn and protect intended victims if I have reason to believe you are likely to inflict bodily harm on someone else.
5. I may be ordered by a court of law to testify or to release medical records.

Confidentiality with Adolescent Minors

Patients under the age of eighteen must normally be accompanied by a parent or guardian to each visit. Parents are often understandably curious and concerned about the treatment of their children. It is my position that young people need to develop trust in their doctor and need some degree of security and privacy to do so.

I encourage teenagers to share information about their health with their parents or guardians. However, there will be some things that your teenager would rather talk about with a doctor, nurse, or counselor. California law allows teenagers to receive some health care services on their own. Health care providers have to keep those services confidential.

If your teenager receives the following services, I cannot give you information about these visits without permission from your son or daughter:

- The prevention or treatment of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and other contagious diseases
- The diagnosis and treatment of sexual and physical abuse
- Care and counseling for drug or alcohol problems

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