



Thank you for choosing our office for your medical care. We have written these policies to keep you informed of our current office policies. Please refer to our website at ifsmmed.com for policy updates.

OFFICE POLICIES, EFFECTIVE June 30, 2011

Office Hours:

Our office is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Please be advised on Friday's Dr. Shikhman only accepts patient appointments till 12:00 pm, our office remains open until 5:00 pm for your convenience.

Appointments:

We see patients by appointment ONLY. Same day appointments are reserved for urgent or sudden illness for existing patients. Please arrive at least **15** minutes prior to your scheduled appointment to allow us adequate time to properly check you in. If you have any changes to your demographic information i.e. address/phone numbers or insurance, please arrive **15** minutes prior to your scheduled time.

After-hours, Emergencies and Holidays:

If you have a life threatening emergency, please call **911** immediately. Our answering service is available after hours, weekends and holidays for your convenience. You will have the opportunity to either leave a message or the answering service will page Dr. Shikhman if deemed necessary. **All calls** should be urgent care related. No calls should be made for prescription refills or appointments.

Cancellations/Rescheduling:

Appointments for established and new patients are in high demand. If you are unable to keep your appointment, we require your cancellation notice no later than **24** hours prior to your scheduled appointment:

*If (1) notice is not received 24 hours prior to your scheduled appointment and
if (2) we are unable to fill your time-slot, we will charge you a \$25 non-cancellation fee.*

Running on Time:

We know your schedule is busy and that your time is valuable. Our physician makes every effort to stay on schedule. If you have been waiting more than **20** minutes and have not been advised of a delay, please speak to the receptionist to ensure that you have been properly checked in. Patients are seen in scheduled order, with few exceptions. Patients arriving more than **15** minutes after their scheduled appointment may be asked to reschedule.

Treatment of Minors:

As a subspecialty office in Internal Medicine, this practice is limited to the treatment of adults. We recommend that you consult the services of a Pediatrician or Family Practitioner for children under the age of 5.

Test Results:

A staff member will contact you if any action or follow up is required after we receive your results. Please allow **10** business days before calling for your results. If the doctor needs to speak to you regarding your results, you will receive a phone call and be asked to schedule an appointment. If you wish to obtain a hard copy of your test results, please stop by the office or notify the front desk before leaving if you have a scheduled appointment and they will provide you with copies. Alternatively, we can fax them at your request.

Prescriptions and Refills:

The best time to get a prescription refill is at your appointment. If you need a refill and your current prescription bottle indicates you have refills remaining, please contact your pharmacy. Most refills require a doctor's approval. Please allow **2** business days for us to process your refill request. Please do not contact the after-hours answering service with a refill request, as they do not have access to your chart. Liability insurance requires that a physician have current detailed documentation on patients that are prescribed medications. If you have not seen the provider in a routine fashion, we will not be able to refill medications.

Narcotics:

We do not prescribe narcotics for long term chronic pain. Our provider will refer you to a pain management specialist for most chronic pain issues requiring the use of narcotics. After-hours narcotic requests will be denied.

Patient Dismissal:

While we make every effort to work with you, unfortunately sometimes we feel it is better for all involved to dismiss you from our practice. If you are dismissed from the practice, you will be allowed **30** days for emergency treatment in our office. After that time, you will be required to seek the services of another physician in another office. Common reasons for dismissal include: Failure to keep appointments, non-compliance, abusiveness towards staff, failure to pay your bill.

Financial Expectations:

For your convenience we accept Cash, Check, Money Order, Visa, American Express MasterCard and Discover.

Private Pay:

If you do not have insurance, payment will be due at the time of service. We require **100%** of the balance to be paid at the time of service.

Insurance:

Although we are contracted with several insurance companies, it is your responsibility to make sure that our physician participates in your specific plan. If our physician is not a participating provider for your plan, you may still select our practice for your medical care; "out of network" benefits will apply. It is also your responsibility to know your insurance benefits. Our office will not advise you of your insurance benefits. Please contact your insurance company at the Customer or Member Service number printed on the back of your card if you have questions pertaining to coverage.

As a courtesy to our patients, we will file insurance forms from our office. In order to do this, we require all information to be completed on the Patient Registration Form. We must have this information prior to your appointment. We will request an update to your information annually. We make an effort to verify insurance prior to your appointment. If our office is unable to verify/obtain your insurance eligibility, you will be required to pay for your visit at the time of your appointment. If you provide the correct insurance information to our office in a timely manner, we will file a claim on your behalf. We will refund you any portion that is determined to not be your responsibility.

You are responsible for paying all co-pays at the time of service. Co-pays, co-insurance, deductibles and non-covered services cannot be waived by our office, as it is a requirement placed on you by your insurance carrier. Failure to pay your portion of services rendered will be reported to your insurance company and could result in termination of your insurance plan as well as patient dismissal from our facility.

Billing:

If you receive an invoice from our office for a balance due, it is because that is the balance your insurance policy requires that you pay. Please contact your insurance company first if you believe there is a problem. The balance on your invoice should be equal to the "Patient Responsibility" portion on your Explanation of Benefits that you received from your insurance company plus any "non-covered services" (less any co-pays that were collected at the time of service). If there is a discrepancy, please call the billing office immediately to advise us. You will continue to receive invoices and be subject to collections if you do not advise of any discrepancies. The billing office may be contacted at (760) 749-9093.

Credit Card Authorizations:

For your convenience in paying the balance on your account, we ask all patients to complete a Credit Card Authorization Form annually. You may specify a maximum dollar amount that we are authorized to charge each month. Non-covered services will be charged to this account if you are not present for: Missed appointments fees, return check and processing fees, co-pays, fee for service. A copy of the credit card receipt will be mailed to you if we charge your account.

Collections:

Invoices not paid within **60** days begin our collection process. Invoices not paid within **120** days are subject to patient dismissal and submission to our Collections Agency and notification to your insurance plan.

The following are considered “Non-Covered Services” by most insurance companies. The fees listed below must be paid at the time of service:

- Returned Checks: If your check is returned to us for any reason, you will be charged a **\$30** returned check fee as well as a **\$25** processing fee.
- Missed Appointments: If you fail to notify us **24** hours in advance that you will not be able to make your appointment, we will charge you a **\$25** fee.
- Paper Records: We will provide to you, upon written request, a paper copy of your medical record. We charge a base fee of **\$20**.
- Late Fees: Invoices not paid within **60** days will result in a **\$10** per month late fee. Invoices not paid within **90** days incur a **25%** administrative fee for collections processing.
- Co-pay, Co-Insurance, Deductible Fee: If we must bill you for your co-pay, Co-Insurance, Deductible, you will be charged an additional collections fee of **\$15**.
- Fee for Service: This includes medications, labs, procedures, supplies and services not covered by your insurance – All costs are due **before** services are rendered.

Welcome to the Institute for Specialized Medicine. We look forward to providing you with the upmost quality of care and we appreciate the opportunity to serve your healthcare needs.