

## **GENERAL MEDICATION AND APPOINTMENT POLICIES**

### **MEDICATION APPOINTMENTS**

When your doctor prescribes medications for you or your child, he or she will monitor progress as follow-up appointments. Your doctor's direct assessment of the results of treatment is critical for effective treatment. At each appointment, you and your doctor will decide the appropriate time frame for your next appointment, and the doctor will usually provide a prescription with sufficient refills to cover the time until that appointment. Scheduling the next appointment as you leave will save you the inconvenience of calling to schedule and will make it easier to get an appointment at the right time. Even when you feel stable, regular, though usually less frequent, appointments are necessary for monitoring progress and for you to obtain on-going prescription renewals. Your doctor will determine the frequency of appointments based on medical necessity.

You must have a future appointment scheduled to obtain prescription renewals. If you have not been seen in four to six months and you request a prescription renewal, your doctor may choose to authorize a limited supply to allow you to arrange an appointment without running out of medication.

Most prescribed medications require a period of adjustment. Do not make changes in your medication program without discussion with the doctor. Please call if you have unexpected difficulties with prescribed medication or if you have questions about how to take the medication. If you are experiencing difficulties or your condition changes and you have not seen the doctor in more than one month, please make sure you have an appointment scheduled when asking for a call back.

Disability forms, as well as other forms and letters, will be completed with you during appointments. If you need a form completed, please schedule an appointment or plan to discuss this as part of your next scheduled appointment.

## **ROUTINE PRESCRIPTION RENEWALS**

Ideally, prescriptions are written by the doctor at a scheduled appointment with enough refills to last until the next scheduled appointment. You can make this easier by bringing your pill bottles or a list of everything you need renewed to each appointment. If you have an appointment scheduled, but for some reason need a new prescription before your appointment, please first contact your pharmacy. They can fax us a refill request, and they may be able to offer an emergency supply of the medication needed.

Please do not use the “automatic refill” service many pharmacies offer. This often creates unnecessary duplications of prescriptions and confusion about dosages if a change has been made or a medication discontinued. While it may be a convenience for the pharmacy, it also requires us to spend extra time needlessly reviewing the accuracy of a refill request.

While we act as quickly as possible on refill requests, you must allow three business days for routine refills and five business days for any prescription you wish to have mailed to you or a pharmacy. It may take two weeks or more for you to receive your refills from mail order pharmacies.

## **STIMULANTS AND OTHER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

Stimulant prescriptions are controlled by federal law, which does not allow refills and limits the number of doses that can be written on any single prescription. Stimulant prescriptions must be written, not telephoned or faxed. Initial stimulant prescriptions are written at an appointment; after the dose has been stabilized, you may need to obtain written prescriptions in the intervals between appointments. Please allow three business days for us to prepare the written prescription if you plan to pick it up at the office. Please allow five business days if you are requesting to have the prescription mailed to you or the pharmacy. **You are responsible for the security of your written stimulant prescription and medication supply; we do not allow early refills or replacement prescriptions or controlled substances such as stimulants.** Controlled substances will not be renewed after clinic hours.

## **EMERGENCIES AND AFTER HOURS CARE**

PSSC maintains after hours coverage for emergencies through an answering service. If you call with an emergency after clinic hours, the answering services will try to reach your doctor if he or she is not “signed out” If your doctor is not available at the time you call, the answering service will contact the covering psychiatrist to address your emergency. The on-call doctor will not make changes in your treatment plan, but will help you address medication concerns that cause significant distress or are life threatening until you are able to make contact with your doctor. Prescription refills are not emergencies and will be handled during clinic hours. If you did not call during clinic hours, your pharmacy may be able to provide you with an emergency supply of medication.