

Office Policies & Information

- **Introduction:**

Welcome to Southern Orthopedic Spine Surgery. This pamphlet provides information that we hope will foster a pleasant and effective relationship between patient and physician and contribute to a better understanding of how to serve you, the patient. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask any member of our staff.

- **Appointments:**

- If you are unable to keep your appointment please call the office and cancel it at least 24 hours in advance, otherwise we will charge: \$50 for New Patients and MRI/CT Follow ups & \$25 for routine follow up appointments as a no-show fee.
- The physicians and staff work hard to see patients on time. If you must wait to be seen it is for an unavoidable reason. We are obligated to see emergencies and patients referred on an urgent basis by other physicians. Some patients require an unexpected amount of time due to unforeseen complications or problems. For these reasons we are occasionally behind schedule. We ask for your understanding in those situations.
- Please complete our new patient forms and bring them at the time of your first visit.

- **Charges:**

- Charges made for surgical procedures cover post-op office visits for a period of time determined by your insurance company, varying from 7-90 days. The surgery charges do not cover x-rays or cast changes made relative to the surgery.
- Charges for fracture treatment cover all office visits related to the fracture for a period of time determined by your insurance company, varying from 7-90 days. The fracture charges do not cover x-rays or cast changes.
- If it is determined you are going to need to have surgery, our office will contact your insurance company to determine what portion of the surgery your insurance will cover. Our office will contact you and inform you of approximately how much you will owe the physician. Patients will be expected to pay their portion of an elective surgery prior to it being performed. Self-pay patients will also be responsible for paying a portion of their surgery in advance as well.

- **Billing:**

A statement will be sent to you even though your insurance company may be responsible for the payment. This allows you to keep track of how well your insurance company is serving you. Your statement will reflect the date on which your charges are filed to your insurance company. This will give you some idea as to how long it takes your insurance company to process your claim.

- **Treatment Policies:**

- Most orthopedic problems can be treated by non-surgical means and every such means available that is indicated in the treatment of your particular illness will be exercised before surgical treatment is recommended.
- Satisfactory results are not guaranteed for any type of surgical procedure as there is not a single operation that is 100% successful. Results of surgery are affected by genetics, life style, and patient cooperation as well as surgeon skill. Medicine is also not an exact science. If surgery is recommended to you, the probability of a successful outcome will be explained to you. If you do not understand the reasons for the surgical procedure, its chances of success, or its possible complications, please ask us. Also, do not hesitate to ask us the charge for a particular operation if you desire that information.
- An adult must accompany all patients under the age of 18.

- **Medications:**

Narcotic medications are prescribed only for patients in severe pain. Narcotic medications are not kept in the office. We require a 72-hour notice for all prescription refills. We do not prescribe medications after business hours, on weekends, or holidays.

- **Forms/Letters:** There is a fee for completing any forms or writing of a letter. The fee is \$5.00 per page and must be paid at time of pickup. (Only exception is Disabled Parking Permits)

- **Medical Records:**

- Medical records will be sent to your insurance companies, attorneys, other physicians, ect. upon request from of that person in writing.
- You must sign a statement authorizing the release of your medical information before it can be sent to anyone.
- **X-Rays:**
If you would like a copy of your x-rays please let the front desk or nurse know and we will burn them to a CD that can be opened on any computer. There is a fee of \$5.00 to make the disc.
- **DME:**
In an effort to serve you faster and more thoroughly we have on-site durable medical equipment. For those patients that are in need of a brace and have a qualifying insurance policy we carry the most commonly used orthopedic braces. To insure that you are getting a quality brace we have a NO return policy on all of our DME.
- **Financial Payment Policy:**
 - **Regarding Insurance:** The services provided in our office are provided directly to you and you are responsible for payment of services rendered. Our office participates with Medicare and many other insurance companies. Should your insurance coverage be with one or more of the companies we will, as a courtesy to you, bill your insurance along the guidelines of our contract with that company. However, co-payments, deductibles, and non-covered charges are the responsibility of the patient and payment is expected at the time services are rendered. Those who only have a co-payment for services will need to pay that co-payment at the time of check-in at each visit.
 - **Self Pay / No Insurance / Balances After Insurance:** The services provided in our office are provided directly to you and you are responsible for services rendered at the time of check out. If you are unable to pay for the services in full at time of check out then you will need to pay at least \$100 and then set up a weekly / monthly payment plan with our office. You have the option to put a credit card number on file so your payment can be automatically charged each month. We offer payment plans for monthly, 3 months, and 6 months.
 - **Managed Care:** Many insurance companies now have PPO and Participating Physician fee schedules. Contracts are negotiated on an annual basis. If you are part of these plans, please be sure to verify whether Southern Orthopedic Spine Surgery participates with your particular plan. We also try to verify this information and alert you prior to your visit if possible, however, it is ultimately the patient's responsibly.
 - **Worker's Compensation Claims:** If your visit involves a worker's comp claim, notify the receptionist immediately. Authorization must be obtained prior to being seen. Please indicate if this is a new claim, open claim, or if it has been some time since you spoke with your claims adjuster. Any charges not accepted as part of your claim become your responsibility.
 - **Motor Vehicle Accident Claims:** All motor vehicle accidents are billed to your auto insurance carrier. Once PIP is exhausted, the balance becomes your personal responsibility. We will bill your primary health insurance carrier, if applicable. Many times, auto insurance will pay 80% of charges. Patients will be responsible for the remaining 20%. Payment will be expected within our usual credit guidelines.
 - **Medicare:** As a Medicare Participating Physician, we accept the Medicare Fee Schedule. The patient is responsible for the annual deductible and 20% coinsurance at the time of service.
 - **Medicare and Supplement:** As a Medicare Participating Physician, we accept the Medicare Fee Schedule. After Medicare pays, your supplement will be filed. Only one Medicare supplement will be filed.
 - **Medicaid:** Southern Orthopedic Spine Surgery is not a participating provider for Medicaid. We are not able to bill Medicaid and any patient with Medicaid insurance is considered self-pay. Payment is due at the time of service.
 - **Disability Insurance:** Disability insurance forms will be completed for a small fee. Patients are asked to complete their portion of the form and leave it with the office. Please bring the forms as early as possible to allow for adequate processing time. We will complete them within 7-10 business days after we have received them.
 - **Collection Fees:** You will receive 3 bills mailed to your home address on file. After 3 bills have been sent and there is still a balance on your account, the account will be turned over to collections.
 - All patients will be required to sign an insurance release form that allows us to file their insurance to their carriers. Patients will also be required to sign a statement stating that they have read our Financial Payment Policy and will be responsible for their bill.

Thank you for allowing us to serve your healthcare needs. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to ask. We are here to serve you.