



Office Policies

This document covers several areas, such as financial arrangements, our confidentiality policy (including for minors), and consults by phone and email.

About Our Practice

Our goal is to provide open and easy access to superior health care with a doctor-patient partnership that values the needs and insight of both parties.

We commit to creating, promoting and implementing medical practices that are technologically advanced and financially stable.

We commit to an outstanding level of service for all patients, including:

- Comprehensive, integrative, holistic primary care
- Flexible scheduling, especially for urgent needs
- Extended time for physician visits to enable the physician to find the root source of your problem.
- An electronic medical records system that provides patients with online access to their personal medical data.
- The ability to send secure messages directly to the doctor.

We partner with a hospitalist care practice for better coordination when patients should be in the hospital.

Scheduling Appointments

There are 2 ways to make an appointment:

- e-mail us at desk@healing-oceans.com
- call our office at 609-474-4325

Information is also available on our website: healing-oceans.com

Regular office hours:

Monday: 8 AM – early afternoon
Tuesday: Noon into the evening



Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: Noon into the evening
Friday: 8 AM – early afternoon

Schedule permitting, we can sometimes arrange appointments at other times.

Appointment Lengths and Costs

The most updated information will be on our website at
<http://www.healing-oceans-family-wellness-center.com/rates-payment-insurance.html>.

You can also request a statement of our rates from the front desk.

Payment

All patients pay at time of visit.

We will submit your claim for the health insurance company to reimburse you directly. Please provide all requested insurance information in the online Hub to facilitate this.

We accept cash, personal checks, debit cards and credit cards (VISA or Mastercard).

Newborn home visits

Are available for any newborn.

Late or Missed Appointments

From time to time, unforeseen circumstances may arise which prevent on-time arrival for your appointment. In fairness to others, our policy is to accommodate patients who are on time for appointments. If you are more than 10 minutes late, your visit time may be shortened or rescheduled so the next patient can be seen on time.

Changing appointment times

We know that your schedule is busy and that your time is valuable.
We make every effort to respect your time and keep on schedule.

Please notify us of appointment changes or cancellations at least 48 hours in advance of your scheduled appointment, or you may be subject to a “no-show” fee of half the cost of your scheduled visit. Please let us know if the cancellation was caused by an emergency.



Emergencies

In case of a life-threatening emergency, you should always call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Telephone Calls to Our Office

Our office does not always have someone answering the phone. Calls often go to voice mail. Please leave a message with your first and last name, a return phone number, and the purpose of your call. We try hard to get back to you quickly.

We monitor messages left after hours (Saturdays, Sundays, and 8 pm to 8 am weekdays).

Phone consultations with the physician

Telephone consultations need to be scheduled with the front desk staff. (Email is handled through the online interface for Healing Oceans.)

Telephone consultations that exceed 5 minutes will incur fees at the doctor's regular rate (\$100 / 20 minutes), but billed in increments of 5 minutes.

Consultation by e-mail

Communication by e-mail is reserved for non-urgent matters. It may take up to 72 hours for a reply. For urgent matters please phone the office and leave a message. Calls are monitored.

There is no charge for brief e-mails requiring only a quick response. Email consultations, frequent or lengthy emails will be charged as follows:

Brief emails requiring a brief response:	No charge
Email consultations that exceed 5 minutes or accumulate over multiple emails will incur fees at the doctor's regular rate but in increments of 5 minutes.	\$25 / 5 minutes

Prescription Refills

Patients should first contact the pharmacy for refills of prescriptions taken on a daily, or continuous basis. The pharmacy will either fill the prescription or contact our office to request an authorization. If you have not been seen by our office within the past year, or are overdue for a follow-up, you may be asked to schedule an appointment in order to obtain a medication refill.

Similarly, prescription refills for medications that you do not take regularly may also require



an office visit, particularly if it has been more than one year since we last saw you. We will not prescribe or refill antibiotics without performing an appropriate evaluation.

Our policy is not to prescribe new medications over the telephone. Sound medical practice requires an evaluation prior to writing a prescription.

Holidays and Vacations

Calls during holidays vacations will either be forwarded to the physician's email. Messages will be checked several times a day.

For extended absences, the name and telephone number of a qualified physician will be made available to assist you in the event of an urgent need.

Insurance Coverage

We are an out-of-network provider for all insurance companies.

Insurance plans that include "out-of-network" benefits reimburse patients who see us. The amount of reimbursement varies with different plans.

Since we do not participate in HMO plans or Medicaid, payment in full will be collected at the time of your visit.

We will send the claim to your insurance company on your behalf, however. Any check they send goes directly to you.

Credit Card Use

When you make your first appointment we take a credit card number from you, and you also give us permission to automatically bill your credit card for any balance due on your account (such as for a phone or email consultation) and for recurring charges (like the fee for the annual plan). You may specify a maximum dollar amount that we are allowed to charge each month. This account will also be used to charge the fees for missed appointments, returned checks, form-completion fees, telephone and email consults.

Late Fees / Collections:

If your payment is refused or bounces, you are given 14 days to make payment. After that you are charged a late fee of \$5/month.



If your check is returned to us for any reason, you will be charged \$30 and any bank charges incurred.

Invoices not paid within 120 days are subject to patient dismissal and submission to a collections agency.

If we must remit your account to our collection agency, an additional 30% of the balance owing (including late fees) will be charged to your account.

Additional Fees

- **Forms Completion:**

Forms mailed in or dropped off after the visit has taken place will be subject to a extra \$25 to complete and return the form.

Examples: Disability Insurance Forms, Travel Forms, Release from Work, Prior Authorizations, and other third party.

- **Records:**

We provide, upon written request, an electronic or paper copy of your medical record. There will be a charge to provide the record to you, your insurance company, or other provider to whom we have **not** referred you for treatment. Digital records are \$1 per page, with a minimum of \$10 to a maximum of \$50. Paper copies are \$1 per page, with a minimum of \$10 to a maximum of \$100. Remember that for no charge you can export your entire patient chart, through Elation, our patient portal, including your labs, studies, immunization history, and correspondence from other physicians or health care practitioners.

Patient Dismissal

While we make every effort to work with you, sometimes it is best for all involved to part company. If you are dismissed from the practice, you will be allowed a 30 day grace period for urgent treatment in our office. After that time, you will be required to seek the services of another physician at another office. Reasons for dismissal include: failure to keep appointments, abuse of staff, and non-payment.

Confidentiality and Its Limits

Our discussions are strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone without your specific written permission. There are, however, certain exceptions that you should know



about:

- We are required to report suspected cases of child abuse to the police and to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Public Social Services.
- We must report spousal abuse and elder abuse to the police.
- We may need to contact public safety officers if we believe that a patient may be in imminent danger of harming themselves or others.
- We are obligated to attempt to warn and protect intended victims if we have reason to believe a patient is likely to inflict bodily harm on someone else.
- We may be ordered by a court of law to testify or to release medical records.

Confidentiality with Adolescent Minors

Visits by patients under the age of eighteen must normally be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Sometimes there are exceptions.

It is our position that young people need to develop trust in their doctor and need some degree of security and privacy to do so. Parents are often understandably curious and concerned about the treatment of their children, and we encourage teenagers to share information about their health with their parents or guardians. However, there will be some issues that your teenager would rather talk about with a doctor, nurse, or counselor.

New Jersey law allows teenagers to receive some health care services on their own. Health care providers are required to keep those services confidential.

Permission from an adolescent minor is required before information can be released to their guardians. This includes:

- 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 problem.