

MEDICATION AND PAIN MANAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

The health and well-being of our patients are our top priorities at Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center and our affiliates. To maintain the highest level of care and to ensure efficient and timely handling of medication requests and refills, we have established the following policy. This policy outlines the procedure for requesting medication refills, as well as our office's schedule for processing these requests, including our policy on controlled substances.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center that all requests for medication refills must be submitted and will be processed in accordance with the schedule and procedures set forth below. This policy is designed to ensure patients have continuous access to their medications without interruption, while also allowing our staff to manage requests efficiently.

CDC Guidelines:

Our practice follows the CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain — United States, 2022. This guideline provides evidence-based recommendations for the prescribing of opioids for acute and chronic pain outside of active cancer treatment, palliative care, and end-of-life care.

In line with these guidelines, our approach to pain management and opioid prescribing is cautious, considering both the benefits and risks of opioid use. We prioritize non-opioid therapies and non-pharmacologic interventions whenever possible and appropriate.

For situations where opioid treatment is necessary and has been determined to be the best course of action for managing a patient's pain, we ensure that prescriptions are given at the lowest effective dosage, for the shortest duration required, and with careful monitoring for any potential adverse effects.

*Please see the article here: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/rr/rr7103a1.htm>

Procedure for Medication Requests and Refills

Submission of Requests:

Patients are required to submit their medication refill requests to our office no later than Tuesday of each week. This ensures adequate time for review, processing including prior authorizations, and approval by the attending physician.

Requests can be submitted through our patient portal, via phone call to our office, or in person during regular office hours.

Processing Time:

Refill requests received by Tuesday will be processed and approved within 48 hours, subject to the reviewing physician's discretion and in accordance with patient health requirements.

Patients should anticipate that any requests submitted after Tuesday may not be processed until the following week.

Prescription Pick-up and Delivery:

Once approved, prescriptions can be sent directly to the pharmacy indicated by the patient. It is the patient's responsibility to ensure the pharmacy information is active and up to date.

Patients are advised to contact their pharmacy to confirm receipt of the prescription and availability for pick-up as well as if there are any specific medications about a particular medication.

Responsibilities

Patients are responsible for monitoring their medication supply and submitting refill requests in a timely manner, adhering to the policy guidelines.

Providers and Staff are responsible for reviewing, approving, and processing refill requests according to this policy, ensuring patient health needs are met responsibly and efficiently.

Controlled Substances and Pain Management

Controlled Substances:

In alignment with federal and state regulations and to ensure the responsible use of controlled substances, our office will not process refill requests for controlled substances on weekends or public holidays.

Patients requiring refills on controlled substances must adhere to the Tuesday submission deadline to avoid any disruption in their medication regimen.

Collaboration with Primary Care and Pain Management:

Patients are strongly encouraged to maintain an ongoing relationship with their primary care physician (PCP) and, if applicable, their pain management specialist. This is especially important for patients who are on or anticipate the need for long-term pain medication or controlled substances.

If patients do not have a pain management practice but anticipate the need for prolonged pain medication, Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center will assist by providing a referral to a reputable pain management specialist. We believe in a collaborative approach to ensure the optimal management of your pain and related health conditions.

Referral to Pain Management:

Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center reserves the right to refer patients to a pain management specialist if, in our professional judgment, prolonged periods of controlled substance use are needed or if specialized pain management care is deemed appropriate. This decision is made with the patient's best interest in mind, ensuring they receive the most effective and comprehensive care for their condition.

Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center adheres strictly to the highest standards of medical practice and regulatory compliance in the management of pain and the prescription of controlled substances.

Conclusion

Steel City Spine and Orthopedic Center is committed to providing the highest quality of care, which includes managing medication requests and refills in a manner that supports our patients' health and well-being. By incorporating these guidelines, we emphasize the importance of a proactive, patient-centered approach to medication management, particularly for those on long-term pain medications. Adherence to this policy by both patients and staff ensures a streamlined, efficient approach to medication management, minimizing disruptions in medication therapy and fostering a collaborative care environment.

For questions or further information regarding this policy or for assistance in coordinating care with a primary care physician or pain management specialist, patients are encouraged to contact our office during regular office hours.