

Office and Financial Policies

Diablo Valley Child Neurology, Inc. is committed to providing the highest quality of care to its patients and their parents. In order to ensure this goal, the following policies have been established.

BUSINESS HOURS

Our hours of operation are Monday through Wednesday, 8 am to 5 pm, Thursday, 11 am to 7 pm, and Friday, 8 am to 12 pm. Our office is closed for lunch between 12-1 pm each day. During non-business hours, an answering service will be available to take any urgent messages only and will contact the physician on call. Please call only during business hours for any non-urgent matters.

We will always try to have a live person answering the phone during business hours. However, in the event this is not possible, you may leave a detailed and confidential voice mail message and someone will return your call as soon as possible. No messages will be left unanswered during any given business day.

APPOINTMENTS

Need for referral from a health care provider:

Since child neurology is a sub-specialty of pediatrics, all referrals to our practice require a referral from a health care provider, regardless of insurance. This allows our doctors to understand the issues of concern, appropriately schedule the appointment based on urgency and to have all necessary medical information prior to the appointment. This policy allows us to provide you with the best quality of care for our recommendations possible.

Late, missed and late cancellation appointments are a cost to us, to you and to other patients who could use this valuable service and time set aside for your child. Therefore, the following will apply:

Arrival time:

We ask that you arrive about 20 minutes prior to your appointment to complete any outstanding paper work and insurance issues. If you are more than 10 minutes late for a 20-30 minute appointment, or 20 minutes late for a 60 minute appointment, you may be asked to reschedule. If you find yourself in a situation such as a delay in traffic, please call ahead to find out if we are able to accommodate you. We understand that unexpected situations do arise, and we will try our best to work around these. However, given the demand of our practice on any given day, this may not always be possible and the appointment may need to be rescheduled.

Missed appointments:

Missed appointments will result in a \$50.00 fee. If you are a new patient to the practice and you miss your appointment, you will not be rescheduled without a new referral from your primary care provider (PCP). A letter regarding a missed appointment will be sent to both you and your PCP.

Cancellations:

All appointments require at least 24 hours notice to cancel and/or reschedule. Any appointments cancelled less than this time window will result in a \$25.00 fee. Please notify Ruth Gutierrez, Office Manager, by calling 925-691-9688 or emailing her at rgutierrez@diablovalleychildneurology.com.

PREPARATION FOR APPOINTMENTS

In order to be most efficient with time, it is always best to fill out forms ahead of time and bring these with you to the first appointment or fax prior to 925-691-9820. This will allow maximal time with the neurologist to address the current issues at hand. A check list and down load of the necessary forms can be found on our website at www.diablovalleychildneurology.com.

PRESCRIPTIONS REFILLS:

Routine refills:

It is always best to ask your pharmacy to fax a refill request to our office. However, in the event this is not possible, you may call our office and press the #2 option to leave requests for refills. Medications that are controlled substances and require triplicate prescriptions can either be mailed or picked up in our office during our routine office hours. Requests for refills will be completed within 48 working hours. Please allow yourself about 5-7 days before running out of a prescription medication.

Urgent refills:

Urgent requests require a phone call to Ruth Gutierrez, Office Manager at 925-691-9688 during regular business hours, if possible.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Notice of Privacy Practice:

Information regarding your child's medical health is held in the strictest of confidence, and will only be shared when written permission is given by the parent(s) or guardian. Prior to your first appointment, you will be required to read and sign a "Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP)" that will outline in detail the manner in which your child's medical information will be protected.

Request for medical records:

Only those medical records generated by our practice will be released to other providers, with written request and permission from the parent(s) or guardian(s). Medical records sent to us by other health care providers will not be released. Medical records will only be released with written consent by the parents or legal guardians. Forms for this request can be downloaded from our website at www.diablovalleychildneurology.com.

MUTUAL RESPECT

It is our office policy that all employees will treat each other and our patients with kindness, respect, empathy, courtesy and understanding. We expect the same reciprocation from our patients and their parents toward our staff. Abusive and threatening language and behaviors will not be tolerated at any time, and will result in the need to terminate patient/physician relations. If there is any violation of this policy on our part, please notify Ruth Gutierrez at 925-691-9688.

FINANCIALS:

Payments:

Payment for service is due at the time of your child's visit. This will include any co-payments, deductibles and payment in full fee for service if we are not contracted with your insurance provider or you do not have an insurance provider. We accept cash, check, and credit cards (Visa and MasterCard only). The accompanying parent or designated adult will be responsible for appropriate payment and updated insurance information.

PPO Insurances:

We will bill all participating insurance companies. You will be required to pay your deductible and/or co-payment at the time of service. You will be expected to pay for all services not contracted by your insurance company within 15 days of receipt of notification from our office by letter or billing statement. If we have not received payment within 60 days of service from your insurance company, you will be expected to pay the balance in full. You are responsible for all charges.

Please be aware that with health insurances, there may be certain diagnoses that are not covered by your plan. It is your responsibility to be aware of these limitations. If we are denied coverage for a specific diagnosis, you will be held responsible for the payment of service for that particular diagnosis. Please refer to "Health Plan Eligibility Certification" on the signature page.

If you have any questions regarding your billing, please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Gutierrez, Office Manager, at 925-691-9688.

HMO Insurance/Managed Care:

If you are enrolled in a managed care insurance plan, you must obtain authorization and approval for the visit with us prior to the time of service. If no authorization is in place, you will be responsible for the full amount of payment or will need to reschedule. If further testing is indicated, prior authorization will be required and we will notify you within 15 working days of the authorization for recommended services. Exceptions will always be made for true emergencies and we will work closely with the insurance companies to ensure payment for appropriate services requested.

Please be aware that with health insurances, there may be certain diagnoses that are not covered by your plan. It is your responsibility to be aware of these limitations. If we are denied coverage for a specific diagnosis, you will be held responsible for the payment of service for that particular diagnosis.

If you have any questions regarding your billing, please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Gutierrez, Office Manager, at 925-691-9688.

Fees for forms:

Please be aware that, while appreciating the necessity of forms, this does consume valuable time of the office staff and providers. Therefore, the following fee schedule has been put into place: all forms and letters filled out at the time of service will incur no charge. However, forms and letters requested outside of visits will require a fee of \$10.00 per form. Please allow up to 10 working days to complete these forms. If there is any urgency for these forms, please contact Ruth Gutierrez at 925-691-9688.

Collections:

As stated previously, all fees are due at the time of service. Any charges remaining unpaid after 60 days of service will be considered past due. Under these circumstances, our office will make every effort to contact the party responsible for the delinquent bill and arrange an equitable payment schedule. If no effort is made to pay the balance due by the 3rd party, it may be sent to a collection agency. In this rare situation, the responsible person(s) will be asked to seek medical care for their child/children elsewhere.