



Policy for Separated and Divorced Parents Rights and Responsibilities

The changes inherent in separation and divorce can have a dramatic effect on the entire family. Upon request, we can provide materials that may prove helpful in explaining these changes to your children. Separation will also have an effect on the way you and your former spouse or partner interact with our office.

It will be important for both parents, and your legal advisors, to clarify who will speak for your children. We will assume that both parents have legal custody of the children unless we receive a court document to the contrary. By bringing your child to our office we each need to agree to a variety of expectations.

1. We will assume that we are the sole primary care providers for your children. If there is another primary care physician responsible for the care of your children, please update us and the other physician on your child's medical condition.
2. We will assume that any medicine or treatment that we prescribe will be conveyed from one parent or legal guardian to another if the child's care is moved from one home to another. We will also assume that the medication is given to the child as prescribed.
3. We cannot always write prescriptions for separate bottles of the same medication to be used at separate homes. Doing so may result in over dosage of the prescribed medications. Your pharmacy may be able to divide the prescription into separate bottles at your request.
4. We cannot routinely plan to send our notes to additional physicians without the explicit request of the parent or legal guardian. You may ask for a copy of your child's medical records, upon signature of a medical release form, to provide to another primary care physician.
5. We will communicate our findings and formulate our recommended plans based upon the information that the parent or legal guardian provides to us. We will assume that information provided to us by the parent or legal guardian is correct and complete.
6. We will communicate our findings and plans to the parent or legal guardian who is present in the office at the time of the office visit. We cannot routinely agree to contact any other parents or legal guardians not present at the time of the visit. It is incumbent upon the adult present with the child to convey any information to all family members in need of that information. If we are called by another parent or legal guardian after the visit, we will attempt to contact that caller and answer their questions unless we are prohibited from doing so by court order. We will not routinely contact other parent or family members when we receive such calls for information.

7. We will honor requests for a copy of the medical record from the parent, legal guardian or an emancipated minor once a release of information form is signed. We will process the request unless barred from doing so for legal requirements and confidentiality or if barred from doing so by a patient who is an emancipated minor.
8. One parent or legal guardian will be *designated* as financially responsible for the costs of medical care at our office. All outstanding balances will be due at the time of service by the parent who is *present*. Failure of the parent or legal guardian to pay us for our services may impact your ability to schedule future appointments. We will send one statement to the guarantor on file and will rely on you to communicate with the other parent regarding the statement if needed.
9. We are available to provide medical care for your children but we are not in a position to provide legal advice. Child custody concerns must be directed to your attorney.
10. In situations where we are asked to appear in court on behalf of the child we will only do so in cases where we are ordered by the court in the form of an official subpoena. If asked to appear in court as an expert witness we reserve the right to charge an hourly fee for our time spent away from patient care activities. This fee will be charged directly to the requesting attorney or the parent that the attorney represents.

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