



Dear New Patient,

Welcome and thank you for choosing The Orthopaedic Center (TOC) for your orthopaedic care. We know that a healthy body is something many of us take for granted until illness, injury, or the normal aging process threatens to take it all away. Your trust in our knowledge and expertise is very important to us, and we promise not to take that for granted. Our commitment is to provide you with an accurate assessment and evaluation coupled with immediate, early intervention and the best possible medical care in a compassionate and caring manner. At TOC, we offer a full range of orthopaedic services to help relieve pain and restore your lifestyle.

Please take a few minutes to read the enclosed information regarding the services offered at TOC and our general information and policies.

Again, thank you for your trust in TOC and we look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

The Physicians and Staff of TOC

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Welcome to our practice. Our staff is made up of professionals who work together to bring you the highest quality orthopaedic care. This information is provided to answer questions most frequently asked by patients.

**Our Mission:** To provide appropriate state of the art orthopaedic care in a compassionate, efficient and professional manner.

### **Our Commitment to You**

TOC is committed to providing expert diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation in a carrying and compassionate manner. At TOC we offer a full range of orthopaedic services to help relieve pain and restore your active lifestyle through a unique blend of fellowship and sub-specialty trained physicians allowing patients to receive world-class care.

### **Registration Packet**

At your first appointment, or if you have not been in the office within the last 12 months, you will be asked to complete a patient information form and patient history and physical form. This information assists your physician in your care, therefore complete and accurate information is important. To facilitate the registration process, you may go to [www.visittoc.com](http://www.visittoc.com) to register online or download our registration packet, complete and bring it in with you. If you are unable to download our registration packet, please come to your appointment 30 minutes early to allow time to complete.

### **Office Hours and Making an Appointment**

Our office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. To schedule an appointment call our main number (256) 539-2728 or 1-800-242-2381.

Your appointment schedule may vary depending on the doctor's hospital rounds and surgery schedule. We believe that everyone's time is valuable and in the event of a delay, we will do our best to notify you in advance. Please notify us as soon as possible in the event you need to reschedule your appointment. If you need to be seen immediately, we will do our best to accommodate you. Follow-up appointments should be made when you check out.

### **Self-Referrals**

If your insurance carrier allows self-referrals, you may contact TOC directly without a referral from another doctor.

### **Physician-Referrals**

If your insurance carrier requires primary care physician referrals, please schedule your appointment through your primary care physician. Some of our physicians' practices are surgical based only and may require a physician referral even if your insurance carrier does not.

### **Canceling an Appointment**

Cancellations should be made at least 24 hours prior to your scheduled appointment time. If you know you will not be able to keep your appointment contact our office as soon as possible. If you cancel or fail to show for three consecutive appointments, we reserve the right to not reschedule your appointment.

### **Office Locations**

TOC has seven convenient locations to serve you. Your physician may practice at one or more of these locations. You will be asked at the time of scheduling your appointment which location you wish to be seen.

### **Billing and Insurance Information**

In general, fees charged in this office are reasonable and customary and are comparable with those charged in other orthopaedic practices in our region.

As a courtesy, we do submit insurance claims for our patients. It is important that you have your correct insurance information at the time of your appointment and to notify our staff if your insurance coverage changes anytime during your care at TOC. We participate with most insurance plans; however, it is the patient's responsibility to ensure proper authorization and physician participation before making an appointment. We recommend patients to read their policy book or call their insurance company to learn about benefits and coverage of their policy.

Patients are expected to pay all co-pays, co-insurance and deductibles at the time of service. Monthly statements are mailed to each patient with patient balance due expected within 30 days. Please see the enclosed Patient Payment Policy for more details. Our business office experts will be happy to assist you with any questions regarding services provided at our clinics. The business office can be reached at (259) 539-2728, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

### **Waiting Time**

At TOC, we realize your time is valuable and that every patient, and their condition, is unique with different needs which may require more time than planned. Therefore, we will make every effort to provide you with the highest quality care and to minimize your waiting time. In the event of a delay or unforeseen emergency we will notify you and give you an option to reschedule. As this is a surgical practice, there

may be times that a surgery may take longer than expected which may cause a delay in clinic start time. Every effort will be made to accommodate for this. We will do our best to notify you if/when this occurs.

### **Cell Phone Use**

As a courtesy to others, we request that you turn off your cellular phone while in the clinical areas.

### **Your Medical Records (Privacy and Safeguards)**

We want you to know that we are committed to doing our best to safeguard the accuracy and security of your health information. Because of many new rules in place, there may be times we ask you to fill out acknowledgements that you haven't had to fill out in the past. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause you, and thank you for your patience and understanding as we work together to keep your information safe and secure.

Please refer to our Privacy Notice which will provide the details of when we can and cannot release your information according to HIPAA.

When requesting copies of your medical records/x-rays/MRIs, we ask that you please allow a minimum of two business days to prepare your request for pick-up.

For your convenience, you may call and place your request by calling (256) 539-2728.

### **Filling Your Prescriptions**

All new prescriptions are given to the patient at the time of the appointment. If you need a refill on your prescription, please call during the office hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday thru Friday at (256) 539-2728. It is TOC's general policy not to refill lost or stolen prescriptions or fill any requests made after office hours. It is also our policy that all request for refills received prior to 3:30 p.m. will be addressed the same day.

To facilitate efficient handling, please provide the following information at the time of the request:

- 1) Your full name
- 2) The name of medication(s) you need refilled (including strength)
- 3) The pharmacy you use (name and phone number)
- 4) A number where you can be reached

We will contact you to inform you if your prescription will not be called in or if we have further questions regarding your condition, otherwise the prescription will be

called in by the end of the day. You will want to check with your pharmacy after 5:30 PM. Certain prescriptions are available by written refills only and will require you to pick up the prescription. At times, a refill may not be given if patient has not had a visit within the past three months, therefore you may be asked to make an appointment prior to receiving your prescription.

### **Telephone Calls and Medical Questions**

Each physician has a dedicated clinical team to assist in providing your care. When you call with a routine medical question or request, the receptionist will connect you with the clinical team. Except in emergencies, our physicians or clinical teams do not accept calls while they are in clinic with patients. If you call when your team is in clinic the receptionist will send an electronic phone message to the clinical team. The team will respond to your call either between patients (time permitted) or at the end of clinic (around lunch time or at the end of the day). We make every effort that all calls received prior to 4:00 p.m. will be returned the same day.

### **Request for Completion of Forms**

It is TOC's policy to timely fulfill patient requests for completion of forms. There is a 5 business day turnaround on forms needing completion. Also, a charge of \$10 per form (unless WC or Family Medical Leave). Forms will not be released to the clinical staff for completion until the \$10 fee has been paid.

### **Emergencies (Outside of Office Hours)**

A physician is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to handle emergencies. If you are hurt or have a problem that necessitates seeing a physician, please call our office number at (256) 539-2728 and the answering service will page the physician on-call. We encourage you to call during office hours so that you have a better chance of reaching your regular physician and he/she will have your medical records available. If you believe the emergency is serious or life threatening, go directly to an emergency department for immediate care or call 911.

### **Surgery**

If you should require surgery, your clinical team will assist you in obtaining any pre-authorization your insurance carrier may require. It is your responsibility to obtain your private insurance pre-authorization or second opinion requirements. We will be pleased to assist you as needed.

Please understand that while your insurance company may only allow what they consider usual and customary fees – the patient is responsible for the patient responsibility balance.

In case you have no insurance, a down payment will be required prior to scheduling surgery and our billing department will assist you in setting up a payment plan. Our financial policy will answer any questions you may have regarding your account. The billing department can be reached by calling (256) 539-2728.

In addition to oral instructions, your physician's clinical team will provide you with a surgery packet including instructions for pre-testing, day of surgery and post-surgery instructions. Every effort will be made to keep your surgery on schedule; however, we are dependent on the surgical facility to ensure we have the facilities and staff available to conduct your surgery. In rare cases your surgery may need to be cancelled but you will be informed as to the reason of cancellation and to reschedule your surgery.

### **Durable Medical Equipment (DME)**

For your convenience, TOC has Certified Orthotist, Pedorthist and Licensed Prosthetist on site that can aid in standard fit and custom fabricated fit medical devices.

### **Physical Therapy**

TOC Therapy Services is open Monday – Friday from 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM and has three locations for your convenience. In order to provide the quality of care that each patient deserves, we attempt to see patients every thirty minutes. We understand that things may come up requiring you to change your appointment. If you see that you will be late for your appointment please call us at (256) 428-3000 and we will do whatever we can to work you into our schedule. There is a \$25 fee for missed appointments. A missed appointment is defined as a no show or appointment cancelled in less than 24 hours notice.

We understand that therapy requires a commitment of time and money. Therefore, it is our goal to make sure you receive efficient therapy and are not required to continue therapy unless medically beneficial. You are an important role in your own therapeutic recovery and for this reason your input is greatly appreciated. If you feel that you have received the maximum benefit from your therapy prior to your last scheduled visit, please let us know that you are ready to be discharged. When we initially set up your therapy visits, it is only an estimate of how long therapy may last. Sometimes it is longer than expected and sometimes it is shorter than expected.

As a courtesy, TOC Therapy Services will file your therapy visits with your insurance company. It is, however, your responsibility to make sure that Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy (Hand Therapy) are covered under your specific contract/plan. Should you require assistance with your insurance company, we would be happy to help in any way.