



Dr. Martinez-Rubio, Pediatric Endocrinologist

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Office Policies:

1. Introduction:

At Little Palms Endocrinology & Diabetes Center, our goal is to provide the highest standard of care to all our patients in a professional, efficient, and compassionate manner. To ensure a smooth experience for everyone, we have established a set of office policies that outline our procedures regarding appointments, payments, prescriptions, and communication. These policies are designed to help our office function efficiently and ensure that each patient receives the attention and care they deserve. Please take a moment to review these guidelines, as they will assist you in understanding what to expect during your visits and how to best utilize our services. If you have any questions or need clarification on any of these policies, our staff is here to assist you.

2. Office Hours:

- **Office Hours:**
 - Monday to Thursday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.
 - Friday: 8:30 am to 12 pm.
 - Saturday & Sunday: Closed
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3. Communication Policies:

- **Phone Calls:** If you call after hours, we will return your call the next business day. For medical emergencies, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. For urgent after-hours medical issues, please refer to our After-Hours policy (as shown below). Our office staff takes a lunch break daily from 12 pm to 1 pm. During this time, phones will not be answered, and voicemail messages will be returned after the lunch break or by the end of the business day.
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4. After-Hours Policy:

Our office is committed to providing excellent care to our patients, even outside of normal business hours. However, it's important to know the appropriate steps to take for medical issues that arise after hours.

1. **Medical Emergencies:**

- For life-threatening medical emergencies, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room immediately.
- Do not delay seeking emergency care while waiting to speak with our office or on-call provider.

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2. Urgent Medical Issues After-Hours:

- If you have an urgent medical concern that cannot wait until the next business day, please call our office number at 561-972-7337.
- You will be directed to our on-call provider who can provide guidance or direct you to appropriate care. Our on-call staff will return urgent calls as quickly as possible. If you do not receive a response within 30 minutes and feel that your issue is urgent, please visit the nearest emergency room or urgent care center.
- **Please note:** After-hours calls are reserved for urgent medical matters only (vomiting, seizures, moderate or large ketones, or low blood sugar not responding to treatment). Non-emergency calls made after hours may incur in a \$50 consultation fee. Routine questions, prescription refills, and appointment scheduling should be addressed during regular office hours.

3. Routine and Non-Urgent Issues:

- For routine inquiries (e.g., scheduling appointments, billing questions, prescription refills), please call during office hours. Messages left after hours will be addressed on the next business day.

5. Appointments:

- **Scheduling:** Appointments are made by phone or in person. We encourage scheduling appointments in advance for timely service.
- **Arrival:** Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time to complete any necessary paperwork.
- **Late Arrivals:** If you are more than 15 minutes late, your appointment may need to be rescheduled.
- **Cancellations:** We require at least 24 hours' notice for cancellations. Failure to cancel within this time frame may result in one of the followings:
 1. The patient may be required to pay a \$50 fee for the missed appointment.
 2. The patient's ability to schedule future appointments may be limited or require prepayment.
 3. The patient may be dismissed from the practice if repeated incidents continue.

6. Prescription Refills:

- Prescriptions and refills will only be issued to patients who are actively receiving care from our practice. You must have an established patient-doctor relationship and have been seen recently in our office.
- If you have not been seen by the doctor recently or missed a follow-up appointment, we may require you to schedule and attend a visit before issuing new prescriptions or refills. This helps ensure that your treatment is safe and appropriate.
- New patients will not be issued prescriptions or refills until a complete evaluation is conducted at the first appointment.
- Please allow at least 48 hours for prescription refill requests. Refills should be requested during your appointment or via phone.

_____ Initials

After-Hours Prescription Requests:

- **Urgent Requests:** If a prescription is needed after office hours due to unforeseen circumstances, your pharmacist must contact our on-call physician. A \$50 processing fee may apply for after-hours prescription services, which will be billed directly to the patient.
- **Non-Emergency Refills:** Routine refills and non-urgent prescription requests will not be processed outside of normal office hours. These should be handled during your appointment or by contacting our office during regular business hours.

7. Payment and Billing Policies:

Insurance:

- We accept most major insurance plans. Please check with the office to verify if your insurance is accepted.
- It is the patient's responsibility to provide up-to-date insurance information at the time of the visit. Co-pays and deductibles are due at the time of service.

Payment Methods:

- We accept cash, credit/debit cards, and checks. Payments are due at the time of service unless prior arrangements have been made.
- For any services not covered by insurance, the patient is responsible for the full cost.

Billing and Outstanding Balances:

- Patients are required to pay all applicable co-payments, deductibles, and any other out-of-pocket expenses at the time of service. Failure to make these payments may result in rescheduling or cancellation of appointments.
- **Little Palms Pediatric Endocrinology & Diabetes Center** will submit claims to the patient's insurance provider on their behalf. However, patients are ultimately responsible for the payment of all services rendered, regardless of insurance coverage.
- If there is a balance after insurance has processed a claim, you will receive an invoice. Payment is expected within 30 days of receipt.
- Outstanding balances over 30 days may be subject to collections or late fees.

Financial Hardship:

- If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please speak with our billing department to arrange a payment plan.

8. Medical Records and Privacy:

Access to Medical Records:

- Requests for medical records must be in writing, submitting a medical records request or release form. As per the Florida Rule 64B8-10.003 there is a \$1.00 per page charge for the first 25 pages. For each page in excess of 25 pages the cost will be \$0.25. An estimate will be provided prior to copying the chart. Payment must be received before the chart is copied. Medical Records request will only be processed for the parent/caregiver/guarantor associated with the patient.

HIPAA Compliance and Patient Confidentiality:

- Our office complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to ensure your personal health information is protected.
- No information will be shared with third parties without your explicit written consent, except as required by law.
- Copy of Notice of Privacy Practices can be found on the last page of the New Patient General Form.

9. Office Etiquette and Code of Conduct:

- We expect all patients to treat our staff and other patients with courtesy and respect. Disruptive, abusive, or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the practice.
- For safety and to maintain a quiet environment, we ask that children be supervised at all times. If you bring children to your appointment, please ensure they remain with you.

10. Forms and Paperwork:

- If you need forms completed (e.g., for school, work, insurance, etc.), please allow 5 business days for processing.
- Some forms may require an appointment to review the necessary information.

11. Grievances and Feedback:

- We strive to provide the best care possible. If you have any concerns or feedback, please contact our office manager at 561-972-7337.
- We encourage patients to provide feedback so we can continue to improve our services.

By signing below or receiving care from **Little Palms Pediatric Endocrinology & Diabetes Center**, patients acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the terms outlined in these policies.

_____ Date of Birth: _____

Patient's Name (print):

Print Patient or Parent/Legal Guardian Name (if minor):

_____ Today's Date: _____

Signature of Patient or Parent/Legal Guardian (if minor):