

WHAT IS FAMILY PRACTICE?

Family Practice is a medical specialty with emphasis placed on preventative medicine and care of the family unit as a whole. The family practitioner is uniquely trained to provide ongoing health care for each and every member of your family.

Family Practice includes experience in the care of newborn infants, pediatrics, office gynecology, internal medicine, and geriatrics. The physician is trained in office surgery. Some procedures done in the office include suturing of wounds, treatment of burns, and the removal of moles, warts and skin cancers. Other procedures done in the office include EKGs, ear lavages, paps and biopsies. Some medical problems may require consultation with a specialist in a particular field. If this becomes necessary, your physician will work with the specialist and continue to provide you with ongoing health care. The physician also admits patients to several nursing homes and hospitals, while providing ongoing care.

The key to a successful medical practice is communication. Your questions concerning the medical practice are invited. Remember that maintenance of health care varies widely from patient to patient—from advising a physical exam every year to frequent check-ups for those with complex problems. Your questions are invited as to the plan that might best fit your health care needs. In a managed care plan, your family doctor is your health care manager.



OFFICE PRACTICE

Purpose

Our purpose is to provide you with the best quality medical care. We value your comments as to how we may better meet your medical needs. We appreciate your referrals.

Confidentiality

We will not release any of your medical records to any insurance company, attorney, etc., without your written, signed and dated consent. There will be a charge for copying records.

Office Hours

Office hours are 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday. Phones will be answered from 8:30am to 5:00pm. Our phones will be on answering service during our lunch hour from 12 Noon to 1:30pm. We encourage you to call during office hours when you have a question or problem. No problem is too small or insignificant. Calling us early in the day will allow us to see you in the office, and possibly avoid a visit to the ER later in the night. Your call may be referred to a medical assistant who works closely with your provider. She may answer your question or consult your provider. In order not to interrupt a patient's appointment time, the medical assistant/provider, will generally call you back during the lunch break or after office hours.

Appointments

Appointments are scheduled from 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday. Call the office for other evening or early morning appointments. Office personnel will routinely inquire as to your problem in order to schedule time most efficiently.

Office appointments should always be made for routine or non-emergency problems. If you have a problem that requires immediate care, call the office and we will try to see you as soon as possible. At the time of your office visit, please bring your current medications. Occasionally emergency situations may delay your appointment time. We appreciate your patience in these situations.

After Hours

Your physician or associate covering the practice may be reached after hours through the answering service by calling our office number (727-938-1908) and following the instructions given. We ask that your calls after hours be for urgent or emergency situations. If the physician on call does not return your call within one hour, feel free to call the answering service again. Occasionally, the beepers/cell phones malfunction. If you have a life threatening emergency you are encouraged to use the nearest emergency room where facilities are best suited for critical situations or call 911.

Referrals

Please allow at least 48-72 hours for a referral. Same day referrals will not be done unless it is an emergency.

Refills

Please ask your pharmacist to fax us a request for your refill. Our fax number is (727) 938-8693. We ask that you call us before the last day of your prescription. Please allow 48 hours for a refill. The doctor on call after office hours will only refill certain prescriptions in a limited quantity.

Lab

We perform most labs in our office. If we do not have a contract with your insurance company, then we will forward the specimen/s to your contracted lab. Labs are scheduled by appointment or with your office visit as ordered by your provider. Lab hours are 7:30am to 4pm Monday through Thursday, and 7:30am to 12 Noon on Friday.

Aesthetic Services

Our state-of-the-art medi-spa offers many aesthetic services. Laser hair removal, botox treatments and skin tightening are just some of the procedures offered. Please visit our medi-spa for a tour of the facilities and a complete list of services.

X-Ray

X-rays are not available in this office. We will refer you to a facility that is convenient for you.

Hospitalization

Routine hospital admissions will be made by the doctors at Helen Ellis Memorial Hospital in Tarpon Springs. Dr. Carson is on courtesy staff at Morton Plant Mease Hospitals in Dunedin, and Countryside. He is also on staff at Community Hospital in New Port Richey.

PAYMENT POLICY

We are committed to providing you with the best possible medical care. If you have medical insurance, we want to help you receive your maximum allowable benefits. In order to achieve these goals, we need your assistance and your understanding of our payment policy.

Payment

Payment for services is due at the time of service unless payment arrangements have been approved in advance by our office manager. We accept several forms of payment, including cash, check, MasterCard and Visa. Returned checks are subject to a fee and must be paid in cash. Also, any balance due over 30 days is considered delinquent and should be paid before your next office visit. We realize that temporary financial problems may affect timely payment of your account. If such problems do arise, we encourage you to contact us promptly for assistance in the management of your account.

Medical Insurance

We accept many health insurance plans. Participation in these plans changes from time to time, so check with our office before your appointment to be sure we are currently on your plan. When we file these insurances for you, you are responsible for paying your co-payment and/or deductible at the time of your visit. This can be paid by cash, check, MasterCard or Visa.

Other Insurance

If you have an insurance plan other than the ones we take, you will have to pay for your services the day of your appointment, and seek reimbursement from your insurance company. In special instances, we may accept assignment of insurance benefits on other insurance companies provided your deductible has been met and the service performed is covered under your contract. We emphasize that as medical care providers, our relationship is with you, not your insurance company. **While the filing of insurance claims is a courtesy that we extend to our patients, all charges are your responsibility from the date the services are rendered.** If you have any questions about the above information or any uncertainty regarding insurance coverage, PLEASE do not hesitate to ask us. We are here to help you.



Thomas E. Carson, M.D.

Dr. Carson completed his undergraduate work at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. He attended medical school at Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, where he graduated in 1979 with honors, and is a member of the Alpha Omega Medical Honorary Society. He then completed a three-year residency program in Family Practice at Bayfront Medical Center, St. Petersburg, Florida, which included pediatric training at All Children's Hospital.

Dr. Carson is board certified by the American Academy of Family Practice and has additional board certification in Geriatrics and Sports Medicine. He is also board certified by the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review Physicians. In addition, he is certified by the FAA as an Aviation Medical Examiner.

Dr. Carson is a member of the American Academy of Family Practice, the Florida Academy of Family Practice, the Florida Medical Association and the Pinellas County Medical Society. He is on active staff at Helen Ellis Memorial Hospital in Tarpon Springs and Community Hospital in New Port Richey. He is on courtesy staff at Morton Plant Mease Hospitals in Dunedin and Countryside.

Dr. Carson is medical director for nursing homes and ALFs. He is a Certified Medical Director for Long-Term Care Facilities and a Certified Home Health Medical Director. Dr. Carson has also received additional training in aesthetic procedures.

Dr. Carson enjoys boating, scuba diving, snow skiing and traveling. He is a member of Rotary International. He and his wife Sue have four children—Andrew, Beth, Sarah and Katie. Andrew and his wife Lindsay have a son, Michael. They are members of the First United Methodist Church in Tarpon Springs, and are active in many community activities.



Carson

Family Care Center
& Medi-Spa



**"Quality health care
close to home."**

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1259 South Pinellas Avenue
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689-3719



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Patient Information Guide



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