

## PRESCRIPTION REFILLS

### 1) What's the deal with refills?

Refills are granted at the time of your office visit and not in between visits. Please DO NOT have your pharmacist call the office asking for a refill. When you are running low on your medication it is a reminder that you are probably due for an office visit. I prescribe enough medication to last until your next office visit. The purpose of your appointment is to evaluate your medical problems to determine if you need a medication change, dosage change or even need the medicine anymore. If you are supposed to get blood work or other tests done, make sure you do this at least 10 days before your medicine runs out.

### 2) How much medication can I get at the time of my appointment?

If you have no issues and you are stable on your medication you can usually get a year supply (thyroid and birth control pills usually). If you have an ongoing medical issue that is stable you can often get a 3-6 month supply (high blood pressure pills, for example). If you have issues that are not under control then you usually need to return every 1-3 months for medication and evaluation (diabetes, for example). Some people who have dangerously out of control issues have to come back in 1-2 weeks. So the moral of the story is to get your health issues under control and make sure you ask for your refills at the time of your office visit so you are not surprised when the pharmacist says "Sorry, you have run out of medication."

### 3) Why can't I just call when I'm on my last pill like at other doctor's offices?

The average office is inundated with refill requests and they often need to hire lots of staff to handle the sheer volume of refill requests. Thirty percent of the phone calls to the average office are related to refill requests. Another 20% of calls are second calls in the same day from the same person who did not get their call returned. "It's 4:45 and nobody called me back! I just took my last pill! Help!"

### 4) Why is it my responsibility to keep track of my medication?

A physician usually has over 2500 patients to keep track of at the average office. I have approximately 400. Either way it is impossible for physicians to keep track of your medication. It is also hard on the pharmacists if you wait till the last minute to ask for a refill. Please keep track of your medication so you can ask in advance of using your last pill. It is best to schedule an appointment while you still have a week's supply left. (Especially if a holiday is coming up soon.)

### 5) Anything else I can do to make things easier?

If you take a look at your prescriptions and try to get them renewed on the same cycle such as every 3,6,9 or 12 months then you will have them all in sequence and easy to remember the renewal date on all of them. Ask each time you go to the pharmacy to make sure you know when you will run out. Keep that list in your wallet so you will know when you come to your appointments.

### 6) What if I'm in a pinch? Are there exceptions?

Pharmacists will usually give you a 3-5 day supply to tide you over in an emergency. I make exceptions for situations in which you have had an emergency or are out of town. Also, if I had to reschedule your appointment due to illness or emergency. I also do not hold patients with traumatic brain injury or dementia to the same standards as those with normal brain function.

### 7) I am sick. What about calling in antibiotics?

The only antibiotic I will call in without a visit is one for a simple urinary tract infection (UTI) in a young woman who has a history of these. This is proven by research to be safe, effective and cost-effective. However, I will not call in for someone who sounds very sick, or someone who has never had a UTI before. Any other infection requires a visit to determine if an antibiotic is appropriate.

Please ask if you have any questions.

Naureen Mohamed M.D.  
716-633-3323  
[www.docmohamed.com](http://www.docmohamed.com)