

# patient handbook



a guide for  
patients,  
caregivers,  
and families



welcome!

## welcome!



At Pacific Neuroscience Medical Group, we are committed to providing the best neurological care for you and your loved ones.

As our patient, you deserve not only comprehensive neurological care, but also convenience, courtesy, understanding and a staff that sincerely cares about your good health.

You've given us the opportunity to serve your medical needs and monitor your health. Our commitment is to give you the best medical care possible. The real measurement of our success is your satisfaction.

As you read through this handbook, we hope that most of your questions will be answered. Keep this booklet handy for future reference.

We wish you a warm welcome!

# patient rights

## your rights as a patient

- To receive high quality, considerate and respectful care.
- To have a free choice of physicians, recognizing that certain contracts such as prepaid health care plans have some limitations.
- To receive clear understandable information on your condition, treatment plan and progress.
- To have a choice in choosing alternative treatment methods.
- To refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law, and to be informed of the alternatives and consequences of refusing treatment.
- To request an explanation of your charges for clinic services.
- To expect confidentiality of all records pertaining to your care.

## excellence at home



Our medical practice combines academic excellence with the warmth, and accessibility of a private office, right here in the heart of Ventura county. From the moment you make an initial appointment to the time you

leave your first visit, you will be treated with care, compassion, and clinical excellence. The care you receive does not stop once you leave the door. Our staff is committed to provide you with ongoing attention to your medical needs, as well as answers to any questions you may have.

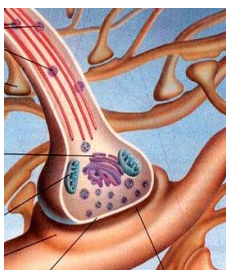
Forming a relationship with your physician is very important. You need to feel comfortable with the medical care you receive. At Pacific Neuroscience, we pride ourselves on forming lasting bonds with our patients and their families. Whether it is family meetings, one on one consultations, or simply a phone call to ease your mind, our staff is ready and willing to do whatever it takes to help you deal with whatever your situation might be.

## overview of services

### patient care

At Pacific Neuroscience Medical Group, we specialize in the evaluation and management of neurological illness. We are dedicated to helping you stay as well as possible. Treatment of your neurological disease becomes a collaborative effort by clinicians considered to be among the best in their respective fields. To you, this means high-quality neurological care is available around the clock.

### education



We offer numerous educational opportunities for our patients and for others in the community. These include educational clinics, seminars, and symposia. Many of these educational opportunities are free; some have a small registration fee to offset refreshment costs. In addition, we will soon have news summaries and an “ask the doctor” section on our website at [pacificneuroscience.com](http://pacificneuroscience.com).

## research



In our quest to help our patients' improve their neurological health and quality of life, we recognize

a responsibility to participate in the discovery and testing of investigational new drugs. We collaborate with pharmaceutical companies and the NIH in collecting data on the safety and efficacy of new medications. Our clinical research trials are all FDA regulated and conducted in accordance with all local, federal and international regulations, designed to protect the rights and safety of our patient volunteers. The care and medication associated with these studies is offered to participants at no cost. To find out more about our research program, go to the research section of our website at [pacificneuro-science.com](http://pacificneuro-science.com), or call us at 805-278-4148. Our research staff is always ready to talk with you about our various studies.

We may ask you at times to consider volunteering to participate in a clinical trial. We are very proud of and grateful to the patients who willingly give their time to help us with this important part of our commitment to better neurological health. We hope you will take advantage of this unique opportunity to help find better therapies for neurological disorders.

## specialty programs

### **the memory disorders and Alzheimer's program**

Our memory disorders program is the only one of its kind between Los Angeles and the San Francisco bay area, providing state-of the art diagnostic and therapeutic services as well as the opportunity to participate in advanced phase II and phase III clinical research trials of experimental new medications for the treatment of all stages of Alzheimer's disease. Our team consists of a fellowship-trained neuropsychologist, a board certified and fellowship trained neurologist investigator, a Clinical Research Coordinator, a psychometrician, and as well as additional support staff who have all received specialized education and training in the diagnosis and management of Alzheimer's and related conditions.

### **deep brain stimulation**

We are one of a few sites in California with special expertise in the management of patients who have had deep brain stimulation for Parkinson's disease, tremor, and other neurological

conditions. Our team is specially trained to recognize the subtle yet critical symptoms that allow us to carefully titrate medication and stimulation parameters to optimize the outcome for patients with complex and challenging movement disorders.

## **spasticity management**

We offer management of spasticity with novel medications such as botulinum toxin (Botox, Myobloc), and intrathecal baclofen (ITB). All evaluation and treatment is done on-site in our state-of the art neuroscience treatment center.

## **botulinum toxin (Botox®) clinic**

Ours was one of the first programs in the country to offer this novel therapeutic approach to the management of dystonia, spasticity, and other movement disorders. Dr. Sutton trained in this technique during his fellowship in 1989, before it was approved by the FDA, and assisted in research that eventually led to its approval by the FDA for cervical dystonia.

Botox and a related medication, Myobloc®, are also helpful for many other neurological disorders, including excessive drooling, excessive sweating, hemifacial spasm, eyelid spasms, and back pain.

## essential information

### first visit

Prior to your first visit, you will receive a health questionnaire and other forms to complete. Please take your time completing these forms; the information they provide will help us to care for you better.

On your first visit we ask that you arrive 30 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment. There may be some additional paperwork to complete. You will also be asked for non-medical information such as your birthdate, social security number, insurance information, and emergency contacts.

You should ask your previous physician to forward copies of your medical history or we can assist you in the transfer of these records.

Please bring any current prescriptions with you to your first visit. This will assist us to accurately document your current treatment, which in turn will allow us to most effectively make recommendations for medication adjustments or changes.

## **appointments**

Receptionists are available daily from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM to help schedule a convenient appointment for you. Initial consultations require a minimum of 75 minutes, so please allow sufficient time. Follow-up examinations usually require 30 minutes. As a convenience to other patients, we ask that you try to arrive on time or call as early as possible if you will be late or need to cancel your appointment.

We make every effort to see our patients promptly, and we ask that you arrive at the appointed time. Unfortunately, emergencies do arise and we may fall behind schedule. Your patience is greatly appreciated. If you wish to change an appointment, please notify us at least 24 hours in advance. We reserve the right to charge for missed appointments without notification of cancellation.

## **emergencies**

If you have an urgent problem, please call our office for instructions. Our nurse or one of our medical assistants will take your message and contact your doctor. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. One of our clinicians is available 24

hours per day. In a true emergency, it is best to call 911 or go immediately to the Emergency Room (ER) of the nearest hospital. The ER physician on duty will begin treatment, and contact our physician on call if necessary.

## **phone calls**

Please call our office if you have questions or problems regarding medications or treatment. Our assistants are trained to answer your questions, arrange prescription refills, etc. Please try to foresee the need for medication refills and have your pharmacy request them during office hours 48-72 hours in advance. The physician on call during the night or weekend may be unable to authorize a drug prescription if your medical record is not available. If you need to call yourself, please be able to provide an exact description of your medication and have your pharmacy's telephone number handy.

## **personal information**

Your medical records and personal information are confidential. This information will only be released or discussed with those whom you have designated with your written

permission. We are happy to provide copies or faxes of medical records to other physicians on your list. Our full privacy policy is available for review at your request.

## **medical records**

Your medical records are maintained with strict adherence to patient confidentiality laws. Each time you visit the Clinic, your records will be updated. This assures continuity of care and aids our physicians in your health care management.

The medical record, including all photographic, videotape, and electronic material, is the property of Pacific Neuroscience Medical Group. You can, upon written consent, request that your medical records be forwarded to another healthcare provider. If you wish to request a copy or summary of your medical record, you may do so upon written consent. Please allow one to two weeks for processing this request.

## **referrals**

Patients are frequently sent to us by their own family physicians or specialists for additional examination and care. If you have been re-

ferred to us, please mention your doctor's name and address when you schedule your appointment. This will enable us to consult with your family physician via fax or phone about the findings and medical treatment. There is no charge for this service.

### **patient relations**

While we are dedicated to providing you with quality medical care as well as superior patient services in all our departments, sometimes problems can arise. In the event you encounter any problems with your medical or other services, we have staff members to assist you. These situations are treated confidentially and handled as quickly as possible. If you need assistance, please call the office and ask for the Practice Manager.

### **prescription refills**

When you need a refill on your prescription, please first contact your pharmacy. If physician approval is required, the pharmacy will contact our office. It is not necessary for you to call us. Be aware that this process can take two to three days, so please plan ahead. Prescription refills are authorized by your physi-

cian during normal working hours,  
Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to  
5:00 pm.

## financial services



We share your concerns over the rising cost of medical care. As a result, we make every effort to

contain costs, consistent with good medical practice. If you have questions about fees, billing procedures, insurance or claims, please contact our Billing Office at (877) 245-2271.

### fees

Charges for consultations, office visits and special examinations are determined based on the severity and complexity of the problem. We welcome any questions you may have about our fee schedule.

### billing

Please remember that you are responsible for the cost of your health care. If you have health insurance, professional services may be charged to your insurance company, however, you are responsible for any charges not covered by your insurance carrier.

In many instances, we will bill your insurance company directly. Due to the

complexity of medical insurance, it is impossible for us to know all the covered benefits, co-payments, and deductibles for each plan. For us to bill correctly, it is necessary that you provide us with timely and accurate information regarding your insurance.

If we cannot bill your insurance company, we will let you know at the time of your visit and give you all the information necessary to submit a claim to your insurance company.

You must bring proof of insurance each time you visit us. Failure to do will result in your being asked to make full payment at the time services are rendered, or in not being seen. Please keep us informed about changes in insurance carriers or personal information.

We accept cash, check or major credit cards. A \$25 charge will be assessed for all returned checks. If you need to arrange a payment plan, please speak with our Practice Manager.

We understand that insurance coverage is often confusing. If you have any questions, please contact your insurance representative or contact our Billing Office at (877) 245-2271.

## **Medicare and Medi-Cal**

We are Medicare participating physicians. We are not currently a Medi-Cal provider, however we are able to see all patients, regardless of their benefits program. Medi-Cal patients will be

asked to pay in full at the time of service. We offer a small discount for patients who are able to pay in full at the time of their visit(s). Please call us if you have any questions about our fees or this policy.

## **HMO/PPO Information**

We are providers for SeaView, an IPA that contracts with several large HMOs. Authorization is required from your primary care physician, who must be a Seaview provider, and you are responsible for obtaining this authorization prior to your initial consultation. If you do not obtain such authorization, you will be responsible for the full cost of your visit. If we are not contracted with your HMO through SeaView, you will be expected to pay in full at the time of your first and subsequent visits.

We also have contracts with a number of PPO's, including Anthem Blue Cross. Because these are subject to change, we recommended that you check with us if you have a question on whether or not we accept your specific insurance. If we are not a provider for your PPO, you will be expected to pay in full at the time of each visit.

## **workers compensation**

We do not accept new workman's compensation cases at this time. Because this is subject to change please check back with us in the future.

# conditions

## conditions treated



At Pacific Neuroscience Medical Group, we treat and conduct research on all disorders

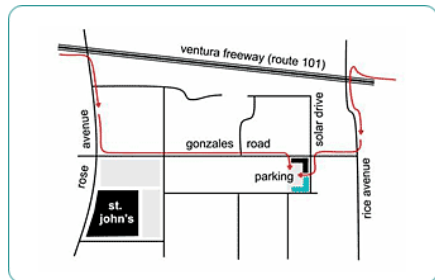
of the brain, spinal cord, nerves and muscles, including but not limited to the following conditions:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Memory loss
- Parkinson's disease
- Migraine
- Dizziness
- Neuropathy
- Back Pain
- Epilepsy
- Dystonia
- Tremor
- Tics
- Spasticity
- Huntington's disease

## facilities



We are located one block south of the 101 freeway, in the heart of the Gonzales Medical Corridor. We offer convenient free parking and easy access to tertiary care facilities, state of the art imaging centers and modern laboratories.



## contact information

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(877) 81-BRAIN

fax: (805) 278-4634

web: [www.thisisyourbrain.com](http://www.thisisyourbrain.com)

[www.pacificneuroscience.com](http://www.pacificneuroscience.com)

