



Thank you for choosing Digestive Health Specialists, PA (DHS) for your gastroenterology healthcare needs. We are committed to providing you with quality and affordable health care. Because some of our patients have had questions regarding general practice guidelines and patient financial responsibility for services rendered, we have developed these policies for your information and future reference. Please read it, ask us any questions you may have, and sign in the space provided. A copy will be provided to you upon request.

The DHS website offers helpful information and options for all patients at www.dhsgi.net. Please be sure to ask the receptionist for a PIN to access the North Mississippi Medical Center Patient Portal. This is where all of your electronic health information is stored.

Practice Policies

Telephone Calls. The automated phone tree will assist in getting your call to the appropriate party more quickly. The following options will be available when your call is answered:

- 1) Physician or hospital referrals (typically new patients)
- 2) Scheduling or rescheduling appointments or procedures
- 3) Billing or Insurance
- 4) Test results or if you need to speak to the clinical staff directly
- 5) All other calls

All calls will be returned in the order they are received. Generally, all calls received before lunch will be returned before the afternoon session begins and all calls received by 3:00pm will be returned by the end of the day. All other calls will be returned the next business day.

Medication Refills. As a general rule, if your prescription has run out of authorized refills, you will be required to make an appointment for a prescription renewal. All refills and renewals should be initiated through your pharmacy. There is no need to call the office to renew regular medications prescribed by a DHS provider. Please notify your pharmacy when you need a refill and they will contact our office for approval. We request 72 hours (business hours) to process all prescription refills.

Missed appointments. Because of the high demand for appointments, an accurate schedule is very important. We feel strongly that every appointment is medically necessary to ensure the best outcome for our patients. Please help us to serve you and all other patients better by keeping your appointments as scheduled. We will provide appointment reminders by phone or email 48-72 hours prior to your appointment. Please ensure that your contact information and preferred method of contact is updated with the front desk staff and respond to these calls according to the instructions.

In the event that an appointment is missed without at least 24 hour notice of cancellation, it is our policy to charge for missed appointments (\$25.00 for an office visit, \$50.00 for procedures). These charges are patient responsibility and billed directly to you. Repeated no show incidents may result in dismissal from the practice as this non-compliance with recommended medical care jeopardizes your health and our Practice.

Dismissal. Failure to comply with the practice financial policies may result in you and your immediate family members being discharged from this practice. If this is to occur, you will be notified by regular and certified mail that you have 30 days to find alternative medical care. During that 30-day period, our physician will only be able to treat you on an emergency basis.

Financial Policies

Identification and Proof of Insurance. All patients must complete our patient information form before seeing a physician or provider at DHS. We will obtain a copy of your driver's license and current insurance card in order to verify insurance eligibility. If the correct insurance information is not provided in a timely manner, you may be responsible for the balance of an unpaid claim. We will request a copy of your insurance card and ID at every visit to our practice. Please be sure to bring this to every visit.

Please be aware that payment for all services rendered is your responsibility whether or not your insurance company pays your claim. We participate in most insurance plans, including Medicare, Medicaid and Tricare. If you are not insured by a plan we do business with, payment in full is expected at each visit.

Though we may participate with your plan, your insurance benefits are a contract between you and your insurance company. We are not party to that contract.

If insurance eligibility cannot be verified prior to your office visit or procedure, you will be considered a self-pay patient and payment in full is expected at each visit until coverage can be established. Knowing your insurance benefits is your responsibility. Please contact your insurance company with any questions you may have regarding your benefits, deductible and coverage.

Insurance claims submission. If you are insured by a plan we participate with, we will file your insurance as a courtesy for the primary and secondary insurances only. If there are three or more insurance plans, we will gladly provide you the information necessary for you to file those additional claims on your own.

We will assist you in getting your claims paid. However, resolving claims issues that require additional information from you are your responsibility. If you fail to respond to your insurance company's request for additional information within a timely manner, you may be responsible for the balance of any unpaid claim.

Co-payments, Co-Insurance and Deductibles. All co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles are expected at the time of service. This arrangement is part of your contract with your insurance company. Failure on our part to collect co-payments and deductibles from patients can be considered fraud. Please help us in upholding the law and our contractual agreement with your insurance company by paying your co-payment at each visit. We will attempt to verify your out-of-pocket expense prior to any procedures being performed but pre-certification does not guarantee payment by your insurance company and therefore could become patient responsibility.

Coverage changes. If your insurance changes, please notify us before your next visit so we can make the appropriate changes to help you receive your maximum benefits. If your insurance company does not pay your claim within 45 days, the entire balance may be moved to your personal responsibility.

Non-covered services. Please be aware that some recommended services may be ordered by your physician but may be deemed not reasonably necessary by Medicare or your insurer based on plan limitations and/or your benefit structure. You will be advised in advance if we believe the service may not be covered, the reason it may not be covered and the anticipated out-of-pocket expense and you will be expected to pay for these services in full. Services that are never covered (based on your insurance and benefit structure) will be billed directly to you.

Multiple Statements – In the event that a procedure is scheduled or completed outside of the physician office in Tupelo or Starkville, you will receive multiple statements for these services. Digestive Health Specialists, PA and the Center for Digestive Health are two completely separate entities. DHS provides the physician/professional services part of the visit and CDH provides the facility where services are provided. CDH is jointly owned by North Mississippi Health Services (NMHS) and DHS. If you have a procedure there, you will receive separate statements from DHS and CDH. You will also receive a separate statement for anesthesia services from DHS Anesthesia for the sedation that is administered during the procedure. You may also receive a statement for lab or radiology pathology services if a biopsy is taken or lab or radiology services if additional services are needed during the procedure. Insurance will be

filed for all services rendered and a separate statement will be sent from each entity. Please pay each statement separately.

Non-payment - If any balance is over 90 days past due, you will receive a letter stating that you have 14 days to pay your account in full in order to avoid being turned over to an outside collection agency. Partial payments will not be accepted unless a payment plan has been established and followed as scheduled. If at any point, a payment is missed, the collection process will pick up where it left off and the account could be referred immediately to an outside agency.

Collection Agency - If the account is referred for collection, agency fees up to 33% of the original balance will be added to the account to cover these external expenses which are unrelated to your balance with DHS. An additional fee of \$150 (minimum) for attorney fees, plus all pre-judgment cost of collections to include court cost in the jurisdiction of the Lee County, Mississippi court system for enforcement of payment of this account will be added in the event the account is forced into litigation.

Credit Balances – In the event that a credit balance is created on any account (professional or facility), we will verify there are no outstanding balances on either account before initiating a refund. Because of the administrative expense of processing a refund, any credit balance of \$10.00 or less will remain on the account for use at a future visit unless the refund is specifically requested.

Contact Consent – I give direct consent to receive communications regarding my accounts, appointments and treatment from this office or any servicers or collectors of my accounts, through various means such as: any cell, landline or text number that I provide, any email address that I provide, auto dialer system, voicemail messages and other forms of communications.

Please acknowledge your acceptance by providing contact information and signing where indicated below:

I prefer to be contacted by:

___ Cell Phone Number _____
___ Home Phone Number _____ (texting unavailable)

Digestive Health Specialists, PA uses an electronic medical record (EMR) system to improve patient care. The web portal that is provided and maintained by North MS Medical Center makes portions of your medical record available to patients and caregivers. All communications are carried over an industry standard secure, encrypted connection. To initiate the Patient Portal and receive your personal identification number (PIN), please provide your email address below and respond to the notification you will receive within 30 days. You may also sign up for this free service by accessing registration at www.nmhs.net/portals.php. For additional information about the benefits of registering for the NMHS Patient Portal, please ask the receptionist.

Email address: _____

Our practice is committed to providing the best treatment to our patients. In return, your adherence to these office and financial policies is requested and expected. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

I have read and understand the Digestive Health Specialists, PA office and financial policies dated April 1, 2018 and agree to comply with these terms as outlined above. A copy of this document shall be valid as the original.

Patient Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Patient or Responsible Party

Date: _____ **Witness:** _____

Patient Name: _____ DOB: _____ SS#: _____

I, the undersigned, agree to the following:

GENERAL CONSENT FORM

Consent for Medical Treatment

I hereby voluntarily consent for care encompassing diagnostic procedures and treatment by my physician, his assistant, designees or consultants, as may be necessary in the judgment of my physician. I also understand that I will be billed for those services provided. I am aware that the practice of medicine is not an exact science and I acknowledge that no guarantees have been made as to the results of treatment or examination in this clinic. I understand that my medical record may be maintained by a computer-based system and authorize access to persons involved in my care. (_____)

Assignment of Benefits

I hereby assign to DHS or its duly authorized agents and/or assigns, all rights, benefits and interests in all proceeds from all Third Party Payers. I further authorize DHS to take all necessary actions to ensure that any insurance benefits otherwise payable to me or my estate are paid directly to DHS. This authorization includes, but is not limited to, billing insurance, filing petitions, filing suit in name or on behalf of the Clinic, filing proof of claims, filing probate claims and filing grievances and all other similar procedures. I agree to provide and sign any other documents that may be reasonably necessary to accomplish any of the above purposes. (_____)

Authorization and Release and Use of Medical Information

I authorize DHS and DHS' designees to disclose to payers, including but not limited to insurers, workers compensation carriers, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid service, or to any other parties may be liable for all or part of the DHS charges. ("Third Party Payers"), all or part of my medical records as may be necessary to process payments for health care services provided. I authorize these payers to pay directly to DHS. I also authorize DHS to utilize by medical information, or to release all or part of my medical information to other health care providers consulted by my physician or DHS, as may be necessary. I understand that DHS will take actions in reliance on this authorization to release medical information and that this information will be released only as necessary to carry out treatment, payment or DHS operations. I have been offered an opportunity to review in detail how this medical information can be used and disclosed and how I can access that information. I understand that DHS reserves the right to change the terms of its Notice provisions and that I can obtain from the Clinic any revisions to the Privacy Policy. I also understand that I have the right to request that the Clinic restrict the release of medical information; however, DHS is not required to agree to these restrictions. (_____)

Patient Signature: _____ Date: _____