

Increased Regulation of Controlled Substances in New York

New York State has a significant problem with overuse and the sharing or selling of controlled drugs. Controlled drugs are those that are believed to have the potential for abuse and addiction, like narcotic pain relievers (e.g. codeine), anxiety medicine (e.g. xanax) and ADD medications (e.g. Ritalin.) Because of this, a law was recently enacted which will make prescribing controlled substances much more complicated for physicians and patients.

Once the details of the rules are in place, we will have to use the internet to get on a state data base of your prescription history from every provider for **every single prescription including renewals we issue**. In other words, the state will be keeping a record of every New Yorker's controlled prescriptions, and we have to check it every time we do a prescription, and the new prescription will be entered into the data base.

Because of the extra work involved, renewals will, with few exceptions for the homebound elderly, require a brief visit, with the usual fee or copay.

In addition, the state is looking much more closely at how offices prescribe and monitor use. If you are on a long term controlled medication, you should have reviewed and signed a contract. We will be absolutely strict about requiring compliance with this going forward, and will need to increase our use of random drug screens, regardless of our concern about your use of your medication. You will be responsible, of course, for the cost of lab work to monitor your treatment, as you would with any other medication.

Finally, we will likely be sending more patients for consultations and referral to sub specialists to assist in management of conditions requiring controlled substances, when there are concerns about how the treatments are working.

We understand that most of our patients use the prescriptions we provide appropriately, but we have to follow these rules. We expect—and especially we appreciate—your understanding and cooperation.