



Leaving Effective Phone Messages for Your Doctor or Practitioner

By Genevie Kocourek, M.D.

Imagine that you've awakened with a very sore throat. You've been around family members that have had Strep throat, and you want to see someone today. You call and leave a message, but after several hours, no one has returned your call. What has happened? Is the clinic simply very busy or were you forgotten?

At The Ommani Center, your calls are very important to us and we work hard to respond to your messages in a timely manner. Here are some recommendations to assist you in leaving a clear message, making it easier for us to serve you well.

We always try to answer calls immediately, but this is a very busy office and you may be forwarded to our voice mail system if there is no one available to answer the call. Listen to all the phone system options and choose the best path for your particular concern.

Always state your full name and birthdate, and consider saying this information twice. We have to find your health record to create a phone note for you, and it can be quite challenging to locate your record without this information. You may think your name is rather unique and would likely be surprised to know how many other patients share your name in our Epic electronic medical record system. We may know you well as a patient, but we may not know your address or exact age, which may be critical to finding your record without a birthdate.

Give your telephone number with area code. Say it slowly and repeat it. You may have several numbers in your health record, so give the number where it will be easiest to reach you.

State the specific doctor, practitioner, or staff member to whom the message is directed. This helps us quickly dispatch your message to the appropriate individual.

State the urgency of your message. Are you wishing for a prompt, same day call-back or can your query wait several days? Are you simply leaving information and no call-back is needed? An added plus would be to give an idea of the best time of the day for us to reach you.

Give us a summary of why you are calling. Leave just enough detail for us to understand how to serve you, but refrain from telling us all the details—we will probably have to ask you the details again when we return your call.

If you are calling about a medication refill, always state the name of your pharmacy. Although we may have a pharmacy listed in your health record, we must confirm this *every time* we send a prescription.

We will do our best to accommodate your call-back request. But please understand our patient and phone call volume dictates how quickly we can get back to you. If responding to your query requires that a doctor or practitioner needs to be consulted, our staff may need to "catch" that person between patients before they can return your call. Please understand, that can be challenging on a busy day.

We look forward to being of service to you!

© Trinity Integrative Family Medicine, S.C. October, 2014 - Genevie Kocourek, M.D. is Board Certified in Family Medicine and practices at The Ommani Center for Integrative Medicine in Pewaukee, WI. She is the founder of Trinity Integrative Family Medicine and focuses her practice on integrative care and prevention of disease for the entire family. Learn more about her at www.ommanicenter.com or www.trinityintegrativefamilymedicine.com. Schedule an appointment by calling 262.695.5311.