

ABOUT YOUR REFERRAL TO ANOTHER SPECIALIST OR FOR A DIAGNOSTIC STUDY

You and your doctor or mid-level provider have determined that you should be referred to another specialist or to an outside facility for additional tests. This is the beginning of the referral process, which is required by your insurance plan / carrier. By contract, we must submit a request to the insurance carrier's "Utilization Review" department with detailed information in order for them to authorize the diagnostic study or treatment plan. Once they receive our formal request and the required information, *they must review your eligibility and then determine if the medical treatment requested meets their guidelines for medical necessity for payment.* If everything meets with their approval they will notify us and the facility, or the specialist's office that you are being referred to, with the appropriate referral authorization numbers, number of visits, and in some cases an expiration date. *This process can be very time consuming in all areas. It is not unusual for this to take from 5 to 7 days for PPO's, 10 to 14 days for HMO's and 21-30 days for workers' compensation carriers to complete the process.*

Once the referral has been approved, you will be contacted by our office regarding where and when to go and to schedule a follow up appointment with the referring physician at NCSRA (Northern California Spine & Rehabilitation Associates).

We are seeing more and more third party reviewers involved in this process. It is also not uncommon to find they are taking the request, processing and scheduling without notifying us of the date, time or need for follow up. If you are not scheduled by our office, please call us immediately so that we can book your follow up appointment promptly to review/evaluate the outcome with you.

Please be assured that your referral is being handled in the most efficient and expeditious manner possible. If you have questions regarding the study being ordered or any other area of your care, please speak with your doctor or the mid-level provider. For questions relating to this process and status of your referral you may call our Referral and Authorizations Coordinator at: 916-733-5023. If you have not been contacted within two weeks of your last appointment, please call our office.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in providing you with quality health care at Northern California Spine & Rehabilitation Associates.