

# Financial & Office Policies

Our first concern in this office is to provide you, the patient, with excellent care and wellness education.

**Preparing for Visits:** Welcome to the practice of Integrative Care. This may be a new experience for you so let us briefly introduce you to this type of care. This is about creating or restoring health by addressing the underlying causes of health problems. The basic principles of these methods are grounded in the concept that our bodies know how to create health if we restore the balance and harmony to our body, mind and spirit. We look at the body as a whole and at each person as a uniquely different “ecosystem”. To create real change in your health generally requires profound change in how you look after yourself.

There is a lot of information we collect to help us make your health program successful and this requires a number of things. We ask you to consider your health in ways and in details you may not have done in the past. This is a completely different approach to healthcare and cannot succeed without your ongoing participation.

There may be homework assignments given at your visit (Vitamin & Supplement sheet, Dietary changes). We are always available to help you with your health program.

On your first visit plan to have a detailed conversation about your specific goals for your health and to review your past health in detail, you will need to bring all paperwork already filled out in order to be seen. This appointment is approximately 1 hour and will include a physical exam. Please make sure to write down all of your current medications and supplements etc., including the manufacturer and dose. We ask that you also disclose all doctors that you have seen in the past as well as currently seeing so that we may provide the best care. If you fail to provide information on providers, medication and supplements, we will ask you to find another provider, as this information is vital to proper care and potential healing as well as dangerous if we are not informed properly. At the conclusion of this appointment we will schedule you for your second visit, this visit will include discussions about your 12 month treatment plan, additional testing, diet changes, supplements, future visits, cost of care and what your path along this journey might look like.

If you have previous test results please bring a copy of these tests to the appointment, these will be reviewed and kept by WCW and become part of your medical record. Please be aware that you will be charged a flat rate of \$10.00 for the first 5 pages and .75 each additional page for any copies we need to make on your behalf. Please bring only *printed reproductions* of your medical records. Our office cannot be responsible for the return of original documents. If you are requesting previous doctors’ offices to send medical records, please remember to allow ample time for them to comply with your requests and understand we will charge you to print these records as well. Your right to privacy regarding medical records extends to your entire medical history and is not altered by changing providers, insurance companies, or type of practice.

Since this is a completely different approach to healthcare, you may be asked to think about your health and pay attention to your health and stay involved in the process of creating health. In order for our approach to work we need your full cooperation with a number of things on an ongoing basis.

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## **These include the following:**

1. You are responsible to schedule your follow-up appointments after each appointment, Dr. Brooks will tell you when you should be seen again. We may provide you with a written homework assignment. It is your responsibility to review this and let us know if you need assistance. The homework will outline the next steps you are to take in working on your health that you and your provider worked through on your visit.
2. During your individual care plan Dr. Amber Brooks will detail out initial and future testing suggested. This testing helps guide your care and in turn your progress. Once testing is received it is mandatory that the parent(s) review the results with Dr. Brooks in a scheduled appointment. Each family will get a copy of the results at the appointment (not beforehand). We have found greater success when Dr. Brooks can explain and educate the parents as she reviews the labs with each family to alleviate any worry and also stress what needs to be addressed. If you decide not to review these labs you have forfeited being a patient at WCW, as this is potentially dangerous for your child. The reviewing and understanding of labs is one of the most important aspects of care and is imperative to wellness and progress. WCW cannot be liable/responsible for care when families decide not to review labs, treatments plans and/or go against recommendations.
3. It is important to understand your treatment plan to maximize improvements. An individualized treatment plan will be given to you (on your second visit), this is the only time it will be discussed in its entirety so please keep that for your records. Some parents choose not to do everything suggested, we ask that you be honest and forthcoming with what you are going to do in regards to the treatment plan so we can best advise and watch over your child for maximum benefit and improvement. Think of the treatment plan as a road map that will help get you to achieving your goals. WCW understands things may not be able to be followed from time to time, this does not mean you stop coming in for regular follow up appointments, as a matter of fact it is even more imperative we see you so we can best guide you based on the things you are and plan on doing. This is a marathon not a race so the people that truly get better and see results are those that keep on track!
4. You may need to keep an ongoing and current “Health Calendar” on which you record several things:
  - a. This is a great time to get your child involved, I usually use a chart and stickers or stamps and get them involved in charting. They love to help!
  - b. Any changes you make in your supplements or medications (prescriptions, OTC, etc). This includes starting or stopping anything as well as a change in dose, number of capsules, etc. Please notify our office before adding or subtracting things from your supplement regimen. We ask that you not give anything beyond what is detailed for your child.
  - c. Any changes in behavior, sleep, bowels and appetite (either improved or not).
  - d. Any major events, such as the flu or vacation.
  - e. There may be additional items we ask you to record over the course of time such as hours of sleep, headaches, etc. The assignment is kept to what is currently relevant for your health plan, so if we ask you to monitor it please make this a priority. You will need to bring this to every visit for review.

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5. We may require you to prepare in advance for your follow up appointments IF needed. This includes completing the “patient appointment forms” or specific instructions sent with your appointment reminder via email by our office staff the day before your appointment. Please set aside plenty of time to fill it out in advance of your appointment. On this form you will be asked to list the details of your current supplements and medications – these may have changed since your last appointment, and answer a new medical symptom questionnaire.
6. At the beginning of each appointment we will review the progress you have made on the previous homework assignment so plan to have this available. WCW asks that you NOT use any products, supplements or change diet once under care without consulting with us to ensure no contraindications exist. Please note adding in other items that WCW has not recommended or approved will also slow if not stop progress. WCW welcomes any information on things a family may want to use, please email us the link so we can review and advise. If you decide to use supplements without notifying us you must understand you have forfeited being a patient in our practice, as this is potentially dangerous for your child and we cannot be liable/responsible for patients/families that do not stay in communication and remain honest about their choices.
7. Do not make any changes in your supplement protocol or diet without consulting with us first please. Many patients have set their progress back by listening to advice that is well intended but wrong for them!
8. If you have a medical emergency, you should go through the usual emergency management channels.
9. We are available weekdays in the office from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM central Monday through Thursday. You may contact us by telephone or email. Generally, your questions will be answered within 24-48 hours.
10. We do not provide primary-care services. All of our complementary services are adjunctive to your primary care team. There is no “on call” doctor that will be answering emergency calls. Emergencies should be called into 911 or directed to your primary care physician. We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.
11. WCW requests you do not share any specific details (dosing, types of supplements, lab results, etc) of your treatment plan with anyone other than your healthcare providers, this is to ensure privacy but also in cases where parents pick up information via the internet, meetings, parent blogs, etc. The treatment plan is being supplied to your child specifically and others may have serious medical complications as a result of the same treatment, a physician should supervise any treatment. WCW cannot be liable for medical treatment or advice being given second-hand and would appreciate your assistance in ensuring our liability. If you feel someone can benefit from care with us we ask that you please refer him or her. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

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Integrative/Functional/Biomedical Medicine is a unique opportunity to either improve or restore your health. It teaches you to become better informed about both basic and cutting-edge science you can use to maintain your health throughout your life. Our goal is to help you move through this process and help you accomplish what you have put on your health wish list.

1. **Cancellation Policy-** I am aware that Dr. Amber Brooks requires at least 24 hours' notice of cancellation in advance of the scheduled appointment time. I understand that missed appointments without notification will be charged the full anticipated visit fee.
2. **Late Arrival Policy-** Please notify our office as soon as possible if running late for an appointment. Any time missed cannot be "made up" and you will be charged for the entire visit you were booked for plus any additional time used. As a courtesy to staff and other patients, please make every attempt to arrive on time or slightly early for your appointment.
3. **Recording-** To align with HIPPA regulations and protect your medical information the filming, taping and/or recording of any kind is prohibited in your appointment
4. **Email Question Policy:** Due to the highly popular demand of email questions and to the often-**lengthy** research and response requirements, our office will be following the policy outlined below for email and phone inquiries between office visits. Email is very efficient for you and for us, especially if we can be prompt in replies and save you time in the car and away from work and family. Handling incoming email questions and between visit communications is a great value for you and for us; we would like to nurture it without getting buried by it. This is a way for you to have short questions answered in between your regular appointments to keep you moving forward on your health goals. Email questions for simple clarifications on your last visit homework and are considered usual if they can be reviewed and answered by our office staff. If they are in relation to your care, require additional research and time by the provider you may be asked to make a time to speak to Dr. Brooks so there is no miscommunication. Status updates and questions that require responses outside of the previous visit instructions and require time by the provider to research, review your chart and respond constitute a new encounter and oversight. Our front office staff cannot answer treatment or care questions by law, these need to be addressed to the doctor directly.

The email encounters are a good way to get your questions answered without having to come into the office. If your question is very lengthy or there are several questions that may take well over 15-minutes to answer, the most prudent choice would be a short telephone 30-minute consult or a short 30-minute in-office consult instead as it will provide additional time for discussion that is beyond what is effective in email format. The adoption of new technology such as email and web services has allowed us to become more responsive and available to you without getting in the car. Becoming more efficient and precise with our services allows us to provide better overall services to you. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

5. **Communication:** WCW does our best to provide high quality care and service. In return we ask all parents/caretakers to be considerate, respectful, and honest when communicating with our office.

## Financial Policies:

### 1) Explanation of Fees:

- (a) **Our Provider fees:** The new patient visit is an hour long and the cost is \$250.00. The second visit is a 60-90 minute visit to review the treatment plan and the cost is \$215.00. The follow up wellness fees are as follows: \$156 for 0-15 minutes, \$219 for 16-30 minutes, \$260 for 31-45 minutes and \$382 for 60 minutes. The fee for a lab consultation visit is \$292 (30-45 min appt) except genetic testing (see below). These fees apply for office visits, telephone visits/consultations, and email communications. All fees are due at the time of service. You will be provided with a detailed receipt for submission to your insurance carrier. WCW also reserves the right to charge for time to complete letter requests, document communication and/or questions asked or requested outside of your scheduled appointment.
- (b) **Genetic Testing:** If we are reviewing genetic testing with you, the cost will differ from our regular lab consultation appointment. If this testing is recommended we will review costs and additional information in more detail. The reason that the cost differs with a genetic testing review is due to the amount of preparation, interpretation and review for your appointment, which is upwards of 3-4 hours. This is a one-time appointment and parents will get a full report (6-10+ pages), explanations of the SNPs as well as recommendations for your specific child.
- 2) **Lab test fees** are paid at a discounted rate directly to the lab. There are no refunds on labs fees.
- 3) **Lab Review:** Lab results take up to 4 weeks to be received and require a follow up appointment to discuss. Lab results will not be released without a lab consultation visit to ensure proper care and management of your child's health. Once labs are received by our office Dr. Brooks will review each lab. We will track by the minute for this interpretation time, time will vary depending on test but in most cases it takes 30-45 minutes, please note this is only an estimation. When you come for the lab consultation visit, you will be billed for the lab consultation visit and the lab interpretation fee as determined by our office. If you would like to know what the cost of the visit will be in advance please contact our office 24 hours prior to your appointment.
- 4) **Copies:** Please be aware that you will be charged a flat rate of \$10.00 for the first 5 pages and .75 each additional page for any copies we need to make on your behalf. Please bring only *printed reproductions* of your medical records. Our office cannot be responsible for the return of original documents. If you are requesting previous doctors' offices to send medical records, please remember to allow ample time for them to comply with your requests and understand we will charge you to print these records as well. Your right to privacy regarding medical records extends to your entire medical history and is not altered by changing providers, insurance companies, or type of practice.

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Every patient will be given 1 complimentary copy of labs when reviewed with Dr. Brooks. We urge you to keep this to avoid charges for additional copies in the future.

**Payment:** Payment for the Initial New Patient Visit with the Doctor is required at the time of your first visit to our office, as well as the second visit. The treatment plan with outlined services, visits and vitamin/supplements will be presented to each family on the second visit. For your convenience we accept cash, credit cards and personal checks.

**Insurance:** Our office DOES NOT file any insurance claims. The office will gladly provide you an invoice with the codes necessary to file for insurance coverage but, we cannot guarantee that any service will be reimbursed. We are currently not providers for Medicare/Medicaid which means you WILL NOT be reimbursed for your treatment in this office.

**Appointments-** I acknowledge that keeping my appointments based on my care plan is the most important part of continued and successful care. If the care plan is not followed I understand that there is potential for no progress in health.

**Refunds** – we do not give refunds for any labs, lab fees or supplements at any time. We are happy to provide links for the ingredients for review prior to purchasing them to ensure those ‘sensitive’ children will tolerate them. We also do our best to provide complimentary samples of supplements when available.

All questions regarding other financial matters should be discussed with Dr. Brooks or the front desk. We want you to be comfortable dealing with these matters, and we believe open communication will enhance the positive outcome we all desire.

I agree to pay all costs of medical care as outlined above as well as a collection agency if necessary to obtain an unpaid balance due for services rendered and any reasonable attorney fees for such other costs as the court determines proper. I understand and agree that the entire unpaid balance will be subject to an interest charge equivalent to an annual rate of 25%, which will begin accruing immediately after Dr. Brooks issues the first “Request for Payment” notice to me. I have read and understand the above information and agree to comply with this policy.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FINANCIAL & OFFICE POLICIES. I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS AND I HAVE SIGNED IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL. By entering your name and/or initials, you electronically acknowledge carefully reading, understanding and agreeing to the above office policies and procedures. In addition, you will provide an in-person signature when you arrive at our office.

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Patient/Parent Signature

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Date