

Patient's Bill of Rights

1. You have the right to a thorough exam. If it is the first visit to your current doctor, your exam could be longer than usual because of certain tests. Some tests need to be done at every visit, others as little as once every several years.
2. You have the right to know the name and qualifications of those who treat you. This does not mean that everyone you see in the office actually treats you. It does mean that those who do perform tests for your primary doctor need to identify themselves.
3. You have the right to ask questions about your exam and to have others hear the answers to help you understand some explanations. Some patients may feel more confident having a friend or relative present to help remember the entire report on your exam or to help you think of questions that may arise after the visit is over.
4. You have the right to the results of your exam as soon as they are available. Some answers are not available immediately, but the prescription for glasses is generally available at the time of the exam and should be given to YOU immediately (not to some other person you do not designate) in writing. There are some very rare occasions when this is not possible, and you should question these events.
5. You have the right to ask about the changes in your prescription. A new prescription does not necessarily mean new glasses. They give the prescription to you because it is the result of your exam, not necessarily because your eyewear needs changing. Changes in the prescription of less than .25 diopters are usually imperceptible to the patient. However, if you require new glasses because of the old eyewear's condition, please do use the most recent RX. It may mean that you won't have to change lenses the NEXT time. Keep in mind that the doctor may not be the best judge of whether you need new glasses immediately if he has a financial stake in the outcome of your decision.
6. You have the right to fill your prescription for eyewear where you desire and as often as you wish. Unlike prescriptions for drugs, prescriptions for eyewear may be filled an unlimited amount of times when and wherever you wish have it filled. Each time your prescription is filled, your ORIGINAL RX should be returned to you when you receive your new eyewear. If you are having your prescription filled by a licensed professional, his copy of the RX is as legal as the original since he is acting within the laws of the state. The return of the RX is not a legal requirement, but is an ethical requirement.
7. You have the right to obtain additional copies of your prescription and/or your medical records if you need them, or to have a licensed professional obtain them for you. Some doctors insist that medical records be sent directly to the practitioner of your choice and that written copies of your prescription be picked up at their offices. It is legal for eyeglass prescriptions to be given over the phone to a licensed practitioner by another licensed practitioner, but can be given to a patient as information only. (It would not be legal to fill a prescription copied by or spoken by a non-licensed person unless he/she is under the immediate direction of a licensed person.)