

As a board-certified rheumatologist, Dr. Feldman does not engage in unproven "fad" or "alternative" therapies, although he may permit their use in conjunction with other treatments of proven value. This issue requires individual discussion with Dr. Feldman.

PATIENT EDUCATION

To help in your health care, educational materials are available at our office or on the Internet. Please ask the office staff or Dr. Feldman for pamphlets or websites that maybe of value to you in understanding your condition or its treatment. Knowledge and understanding of your illness are an important part of your participation.

INFORMATION ON THE NON-STEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS

The medications most commonly used today to treat arthritis problems, or other conditions of inflammation such as tendonitis or bursitis, are known as the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. You may see them commonly referred to as NSAIDs. They are called non-steroidal because they contain no steroids or cortisone. Anti-inflammatory refers to the fact they generally act to reduce inflammation. They also reduce fever, and can be used as general pain relievers. The first NSAID to be introduced was aspirin. Broadly speaking they can be divided into two groups; the traditional or older NSAIDs, and the newer COX2 inhibitor group. The older traditional NSAIDs are available as generic and branded products. The newer COX2 inhibitors are only available as branded products; therefore their cost is higher than the traditional NSAIDs. The traditional NSAIDs are aspirin, Arthrotec (a combination of the traditional NSAID diclofenac, and the stomach protector misoprostol [Cytotec]), diclofenac (Voltaren), diflunisal (Dolobid), etodolac (Lodine), fenoprofen (Ansaid), ibuprofen (Motrin), indomethacin (Indocin), nabumetone (Relafen), naproxen (Naprosyn, Aleve), oxazoprozin (Daypro), piroxicam (Feldene), salsalate (Disalcid), sulindac (Clinoril), tolmetin (Tolectin), and Toradol. The newer COX2 inhibitor group includes Bextra, Celebrex, and Vioxx. Mobic may be in an in between group. The major difference (aside from cost) between the two groups is that the newer COX2 inhibitors are generally considered to cause less gastrointestinal bleeding and ulcers. There is no proof that the newer drugs are more effective as anti-inflammatory medications than the older, traditional NSAIDs.

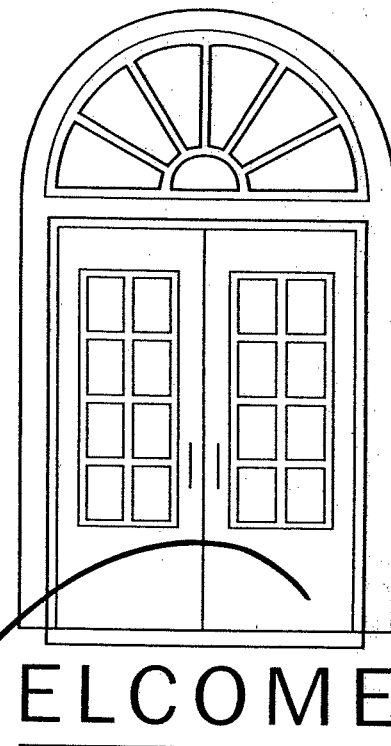
Some insurance plans require that several traditional NSAIDs be attempted as treatment, before approval for the newer agents can be obtained (unless certain criteria are met).

A trial of the medication is usually necessary to determine a patient's response. It is impossible to predict how a patient will react to a particular medication. It is not a wise policy to take someone else's medication without checking with the doctor.

- DO -- Take the medication as prescribed.
- DO -- Contact the Doctor if you think you are having a problem from the medication.
- DO -- Discontinue the medication and contact the Doctor if you notice BLACK STOOLS or if you VOMIT BLOOD.
- DO -- Take your medication with a full 8 oz. glass of water.
- DO -- Tell the Doctor if you are allergic to aspirin (that means you have developed hives or asthma after taking aspirin).
- DO -- Tell the Doctor if you are taking aspirin for heart attack or stroke prevention.
- DO -- Tell the Doctor if you are taking blood thinners such as Coumadin.
- DO -- Tell the Doctor if you have any chronic liver or kidney impairment.
- DO -- Tell the Doctor about your alcohol habits.
- DO -- In general, you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) products with the medications Dr. Feldman prescribes, if you need extra pain relief, have a headache, or flu.
- DON'T -- Take aspirin or other over-the-counter pain killers such as Advil, Motrin, ibuprofen, or Aleve, unless you are specifically told to do so.
- DON'T -- Jump back and forth from one medication to another.

OUR COMMITMENT

We are pleased that you have chosen this office for evaluation of your rheumatic disease problem. You may be assured that Dr. Feldman and his staff are committed to quality medical care. We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions. And yes, the Doctor does smile (sometimes).



ARTHRITIS AND RHEUMATIC DISEASES

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We welcome you as a patient...

and appreciate the opportunity to provide you with medical services. We recognize you, the patient, as an equal participant in making decisions that will affect your health. The information that follows is designed to answer many of the questions most patients have. We want you to know our policies and methods of practice. Everyone in this office operates as a team member. All have been trained as professionals and we take pride in our professional capability.

OFFICE HOURS

Appointments are available on the following schedule: Monday through Thursday 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday 9:30 to 1:30. The office is closed for lunch each day between 1:00 and 2:30. We see all patients on an appointment basis, and we request that you call in advance so that we can reserve time for you. We make every effort to honor all time commitments and request that you extend the same courtesy to us. We do follow our appointment schedule for the day. If a patient is called in before you, please understand that he or she may be scheduled for laboratory tests or x-rays. We know your time is valuable and therefore we try to schedule your time most efficiently. Please understand that emergencies, and interruptions because of doctor's telephone calls, can occur. Whenever possible, you will be informed if there will be a delay.

Dr. Feldman feels that it is important to give each

patient as much time as necessary. When it is your turn to see the doctor, the same courtesy will be extended to you. When a patient seeks the help of a specialist, their problem is often complicated. Please be patient.

TELEPHONE CALLS

All patients are encouraged to call with any questions they have. The staff has been trained to answer many of your questions. They will check with the doctor. If you must speak with the doctor, please leave your message, and the doctor will return your call at the end of the day.

AFTER HOURS TELEPHONE CALLS

If you find it necessary to contact the doctor after office hours, you must call the office phone number. Dr. Feldman has an answering machine. Please listen carefully to the recorded message on the answering machine. Follow the instructions carefully. This service is available 24 hours a day. In case of an emergency after hours, the answering machine will beep the doctor. The doctor carries a beeper whenever he is on call. At all other times, there is another qualified physician on call, who may be contacted according to the answering machine instructions.

If the answering machine does not answer, please assume there is some malfunction. You can consider trying the number again after waiting about 15 minutes. Otherwise, go to your nearest hospital emergency room for care. The hospital will try to reach Dr. Feldman or the physician covering for him.

INSURANCE

MEDICARE - For those patients with Medicare, assignment is accepted, after the \$185 yearly deductible has been met. However, unless you have a Medigap crossover plan, you are required to pay the 20% not covered by Medicare. We will be happy to give you a copy of your bill in order for you to obtain your reimbursement from your co-insurance plan.

OTHER INSURANCE PLANS - Dr. Feldman is a provider with many insurance companies. Please provide our office staff with your insurance identification card and all necessary information so that we can verify your insurance coverage. Your insurance policy is an agreement between you and your insurer. Many insurance policies are designed to pay partial amounts for medical services. You are responsible for all deductible and co-pay fees.

NO INSURANCE - Payment is expected when services are rendered. Other arrangements can be made depending upon special circumstances.

SPECIALTY OF RHEUMATOLOGY

What is a rheumatologist? A rheumatologist is a specialist who medically manages and treats arthritis and the other rheumatic diseases. The rheumatologist must be trained as a general internist, and only then is he qualified to obtain further training in the subspecialty of rheumatology. The rheumatologist performs no surgery. Our aim, is to try and establish an accurate diagnosis prior to outlining an appropriate treatment plan. Our goal is to help patients achieve their maximum capacity to function given the limitations of their particular problem; and to try to prevent further damage to joint structures.

BACKGROUND

Dr. Feldman is a native of Brooklyn, New York. He received his B.S. degree from Brooklyn College and his M.D. degree from Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. He served as an intern and resident at Kings County Hospital-State University Hospital in Brooklyn, and he completed his residency at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. After serving in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, he completed his Rheumatology training at Kings County Hospital-State University of New York. He was board certified as a diplomate of internal medicine in 1974, and he was board certified as a diplomate of rheumatology in 1978. Prior to establishing his own practice in Florida in 1979, he was a member of a rheumatology group in West Hartford, Connecticut.

He is currently on the staff of the following hospitals: Florida Medical Center, University Hospital, Coral Springs Medical Center, and Healthsouth Sunrise Hospital. He is a member of the American College of Rheumatology, Florida Society of Rheumatology, and the International Society of Clinical Densitometry. In addition to diagnosing and managing rheumatic diseases, Dr. Feldman sometimes participates in clinical research projects. He lectures frequently to lay and professional groups in an attempt to educate the community regarding arthritis and its treatments.