

POLICY STATEMENT
TENNESSEE BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC EXAMINATION

POLICY: PRESCRIBING FOR ONESELF AND ONE'S FAMILY

The Tennessee Board of Osteopathic Examination adopts the following guidelines as policy for self-prescribing and for prescribing to one's immediate family. Failure to abide by this policy will constitute unprofessional conduct in violation of T.C.A. 63-9-111(b)(1).

Physicians should not treat themselves, immediate/close family, or others in close relationships because they

- could lack needed professional and personal objectivity,
- may fail to elicit sensitive history and/or perform sensitive exams, and
- might be tempted, even if not comfortable doing so, to provide treatment beyond their expertise and/or training, due to concerns about patient autonomy and informed consent.

Patients may be reluctant to receive care from a family member, for the above noted reasons. Minors may feel unfairly compelled to receive care from a close family member. Physicians bear the responsibility to note that, if tensions develop as a part of professional medical care rendered to a family member, this may negatively impact the patient's relationship with the physician. They must also note that any family members may be unwilling to state their reluctance/discomfort with being treated by a physician family member.

For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" means a spouse, parent, child, sibling, or others with whom the physician has significant emotional involvement, including significant dating and live-in relationships.

Proper medical records and documentation shall be maintained of all treatment and such data will be provided to the patient's primary care provider, if there is one, on a timely basis. Sensitive and/or intimate history and physical examinations should be avoided except in the case of a life-threatening emergency and in all other cases where the patient is not comfortable with such treatment.

Self-Prescribing

- 1) A physician cannot have a bona fide doctor/patient relationship with himself or herself. Therefore, except in emergency or urgent situations, a physician shall not prescribe, dispense, administer, or otherwise treat himself/ herself.
- 2) Prescribing, providing, or administering any scheduled drug to oneself is prohibited.

Immediate Family

- 1) Treatment of immediate family members should be reserved only for minor, self-limited, short-duration illnesses, or emergency situations.
- 2) No scheduled drugs should be dispensed or prescribed except in emergency situations.

Supervisee Treatment

- 1) Unless there is an established provider-patient relationship, including a chart, prescribing by supervisees to the physician or family members of the supervising or collaborating physician could give the appearance of coercion and be considered unprofessional conduct. This behavior could result in disciplinary action on the physician's license.
- 2) No scheduled drugs should be dispensed or prescribed except in emergency situations.

Adopted by the Board of Osteopathic Examination on this 2nd day of March 2022.

JM Wisting D.O. 06/23/2022
Chairperson
Board of Osteopathic Examination