**Always check with the prescribing physician or provider to clarify any questions regarding a medication prior to refilling**. In addition, establish a list of the most commonly prescribed medications in the practice. Using this physician-approved list, implement drug-specific protocols to determine which medications will require additional appointments or lab tests before a refill request is processed.

**Refill Protocols**

* Refill medications only for established patients who have been seen in the office within an acceptable number of months or weeks. If the patient has an appointment scheduled, refill only the quantity needed until that appointment.
* Identify staff permitted to implement the protocol.
* Limit the protocol to maintenance drugs with physician orders written within the past 12 months.
* Verify the patient’s allergies and medications, including over-the-counter medications and/or herbal supplements.
* Note in the patient’s medical record the number of refills provided.
* Notify the patient immediately if a refill request has been denied.

**Do-Not-Refill Protocols**

* Do not refill any medications for nonestablished patients.
* Do not refill any medications for patients who have not been seen within an established number of months. Do not refill any medication unless authorized by the physician or provider *and* an office appointment has been scheduled. Refill only the quantity needed until that appointment.
* Do not refill controlled substances without a physician’s or provider’s order.
* Ensure that patients who are terminated from the practice have enough medication to see them through while establishing with a new provider.
* Do not refill high-risk medications (e.g., anticoagulation therapy). When you receive a   
  high-risk refill request, refer the request to a physician, provider, or authorized nurse.

**Minimum Documentation Requirements**

* Include the dosage, frequency, route, and quantity of all medications, including over-the-counter varieties, in the medical record and/or in the medication refill log.
* Verify the list of patient’s allergies and medications, including over-the-counter medications and/or herbal supplements.
* Log the refill request and specific directions provided to the patient.
* Note the approval date, time, and all applicable signatures (i.e., the physicians, providers   
  or nurses).
* Document patient notification that a refill request has been denied.