

Western Slope Endocrinology is a **specialty practice**. We do not replace your primary care practice; we **work with** your primary care team and your other specialty physicians to provide medical advice and care to you. We specialize in **Endocrinology and Metabolism**, the study of endocrine glands and hormones. This includes diabetes mellitus (type 1, type 2 and other forms of diabetes such as MODY), bone and calcium disorders (osteoporosis, osteomalacia, hyperparathyroidism and hypoparathyroidism), thyroid and pituitary disorders, and problems with the adrenal gland, the ovaries and testicles.

There are various ways that we as specialists can work with you and your primary care team.

One way is to do a **consultation**. With a consultation we will review your records and test results and provide advice to you and your care team about additional testing or treatment for your condition. This may be a consultation between your primary care or other referring physician and our physician with no need for an appointment on your part. It may require a consultation appointment and maybe one or two follow up appointments to sort through issues. However, when we do a consultation we do not take over the treatment or follow up of a condition. Instead, after reviewing your records, your medical history and examination, your test results and your personal circumstances and needs, we will make recommendations or give advice to you and your primary care team and/or referring practice team regarding additional testing, treatment options and monitoring.

Another way of working together is called **co-management**. With co-management we will help with the treatment (or management) of one or more of your medical conditions.

One form of co-management is **shared care**. With shared care we will make recommendations for monitoring and/or treating a disorder and will help with ongoing management but your primary care team will be in charge of medication prescriptions and refills, ordering tests for monitoring and they will be the first practice you call if you have a problem with this condition. Your primary care team will share your test results with us and may ask that we periodically see you for a follow up visit.

Another form of co-management is called **principal care**. With principal care we will actually take over the care for the particular condition for which you were referred. We will write the prescriptions and refills for the medications used to treat this condition and we will order and respond to the tests for monitoring this condition and your response to treatment. With principal care, you should call our practice first if you have a problem with this condition. We still communicate with your primary care team about your condition and treatment and test results. We will send a copy of your visit note to your primary care team and any relevant specialists involved in your care so that everyone is aware of what medications you are taking and how you are doing with that condition. Examples of conditions that are most often referred for principal care co-management by our practice is type 1 diabetes and insulin pump therapy, complex type 2 diabetes, hypopituitarism, thyroid cancer, hypoparathyroidism and adrenal insufficiency or multiple endocrine disorders occurring in one person. Other conditions may require principal care co-management for a brief time or until stable is hyperthyroidism, hyperparathyroidism, osteoporosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome as well as other disorders.

The way that we work with you and your primary care team depends on what your referring clinician requests and the stability of your condition as well as your preference and needs. If your condition improves or resolves then you may not need any further care in our practice and we can transition the management of the disorder back to your primary care team. If your condition becomes less stable or worsens, then we may need to help more with your management. Therefore, the above categories are flexible.