

# How to Set Up Your Medical Practice's Facebook Page



Setting up social media accounts for your practice can be a simple, step-by-step process and a great place to start is Facebook. Think of Facebook as a channel to connect with your existing patients and even bring in new ones by offering helpful tips and insights into your practice. Follow these simple steps to get your Facebook page up and running and reap the rewards of this added connection to your patient community.

## 1 YOUR PERSONAL ACCOUNT

If you don't have a personal account on Facebook, it is time to set one up because your business account will be connected to it. By Facebook rules, you cannot have separate business and personal accounts. And, while you can set up a business-only page, without having a personal account, there are many limitations to these pages. Just make sure that as the practice owner, your Facebook business page is connected to your own personal page. You don't want to have it connected to the page of even a trusted employee because if they leave your practice, you risk losing access to your business page. To set up your personal account, just go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and follow the instructions.

## 2 CREATING THE PAGE

Once you have created your personal profile, go to [www.facebook.com/pages/create.php](http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php) and choose "Local Business or Place". It will then ask you to choose the category of your business from a drop-down menu. You will also choose a sub-category. Make sure to choose the categories so that if, for example, a patient is searching for an urologist in San Francisco, they can easily find you.

## 3 CHOOSING YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE NAME

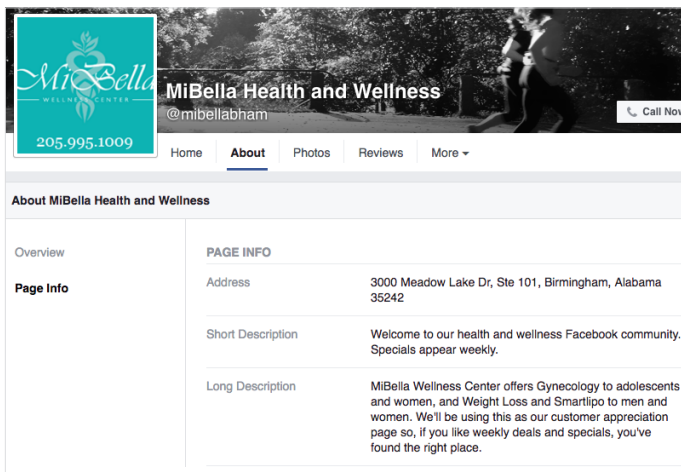
Under the Category menu, you will be asked to enter the name of your page. This should be the name of your practice. However, if another practice with the same name already has that page, you might choose your practice name followed by the city you are in. Facebook gives you 70 characters to work with, so you may have to tweak it a little. Just remember that once you have more than 200 fans or likes, you won't be allowed to change your page name. So, choose wisely. Select the box next to "I agree to Facebook Pages Terms" and click "Get Started" to move to the next step.

## 4 YOUR PROFILE PICTURE

Your profile picture could be a photo of yourself, your staff, or your office. Facebook recommends a photo size of 180 pixels by 180 pixels. If you choose a picture that is larger, you can adjust the viewable portion by placing your pointer on the picture and clicking "Edit Profile Picture" and then "Edit Thumbnail". Once you have your profile picture set, click "Next" to move on.

### 5 THE ABOUT SECTION

Be as thorough as you can in filling out this section. Here you will put your website address, your physical address, and describe your practice. Don't skimp on your description here. Tell patients about yourself and your practice and be sure to use keywords. At this point, you will click on the button that says you are a real business and then click "Save Info".



### 6 CHOOSE ADMINISTRATORS

You need to choose who will be responsible for adding content to your page. You can designate a Page Manager. Just remember that this person will have the right to send messages, create posts and ads, and review the reports generated by Facebook on your page. If you choose to keep the role of Manager for yourself, you can designate other functions such as Moderator or Content Creator for employees to limit access.

### 7 REVIEW YOUR PERMISSIONS

To review your permission settings, click "Edit Page" then "Manage Permissions". You will find these in the admin panel. Two key areas to check are the Profanity Blocklist, which should be set to medium or high and the Message button.

If you leave your message button on the default setting, patients can send you messages through your page. This is fine if you make sure to monitor your page. However, if you don't plan to check your page regularly, change your default messaging so that patients will be able to reach you through your office email.

### 8 YOUR COVER PHOTO

The final step before you are ready to begin posting is to add a cover photo. To do this, just click "Add a Cover" and upload a photo from your computer. You can position it the way you like and then click "Save Changes". Facebook does have a rule that cover photos cannot contain more than 20% text, so just be aware of that and you can choose a picture that best shows off your practice to both new and current patients.



Now that you have your business Facebook page up and running, you can "Like" your own page, start posting content, and send out emails to your patient community letting them know where to find your page. Remember that by its nature, social media is "social". That means that once your page is up, it is vital that your practice is active, posting regularly, and providing timely, useful content and tips.