

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

Updated 2-23-09

THIS DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION

PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you that relates to your past, present or future physical, mental health or condition and related health care services.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information: Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, to support the operation of the physician's practice, and any other use required by law.

Treatment: We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, we would disclose your protected health information as necessary to a home health agency that provides care to you or provide to a physician to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician has the necessary information to diagnose and treat you.

Payment: Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your healthcare services. For example, obtaining approval for a hospital stay may require that your relevant health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the hospital admission.

Healthcare Operations: We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of your physician's practice. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conducting or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your physician is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of an appointment.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required By Law, Public Health issues as required by law, Communicable Diseases: Health Oversight, Abuse or Neglect; Food and Drug Administration requirements; Legal Proceedings; Law Enforcement; Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation; Research; Criminal Activity; Military Activity and National Security; Workers' Compensation; Inmates; Required Uses.

Your Rights

You have the right to inspect and have copied (at your expense) your protected health information under federal law; however, you may not inspect or copy the following records: psychotherapy notes, information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding, and protected health information that is subject to law that prohibits access to protected health information.

You have the right to request a restriction of our protected health information. This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply (we have a form available).

Your physician is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If your physician believes it is in your best interest to permit and use disclosure of your protected health information, your protected health information will not be restricted. You then have the right to use another Healthcare Professional.

You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location within reason.

You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, even if you have agreed to accept this notice alternatively, i.e. electronically.

You may have the right to have your physician amend your protected health information. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information.

We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and will inform you at your next office visit following the change. You then have the right to object or withdraw as provided in this notice.

Complaints

You may complaint to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying our privacy contact of your complaint. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

This notice was published and became effective on/or before April 14, 2003, and updated on February 23, 2009.

Disclosures: Under the law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of section 164.500.

Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures: Will be made **only** with your written consent, authorization or opportunity to object unless required by law, this includes inquiries about your scheduled appointments. You may revoke this authorization in writing at any time, except to the extent that your physician or the physician's practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

Treatment of Minors: It is our policy that only a natural, adoptive parent or legal guardian is authorized to present a child for treatment UNLESS a written authorization is given on the form provided.