

Notice of Privacy Practices



This Notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

This Notice describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information to provide treatment, obtain payment and conduct health care operations and for other purposes permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights concerning your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you and relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services.

We are required by law to follow the practices described in this Notice. We may change the terms of this Notice at any time. The new Notice will be effective for all protected health information we maintain at that time including health information we created or received before we made the changes.

You may obtain a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices at any time by calling our office or requesting one at your next appointment.

Uses and Disclosures of Health Information

Treatment: We will use and disclose your health information to provide, coordinate and manage health care and related services for you. For example we will disclose information to a specialist to whom you have been referred to ensure the provider has enough information to diagnose and/or treat you. We may also disclose information to a laboratory that, at our request, becomes involved in your treatment.

Payment: We may use and disclose your information to obtain payment for services we provided to you. For example we will send the necessary information to your health or dental insurance company to obtain payment for the treatment provided.

Healthcare Operations: We will use and disclose your health information to conduct the business activities of this office.

These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment and improvement activities, review of the performance and qualifications of employees, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, and certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

We may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when we are ready to begin your treatment. Prior to your appointment, we may call or send a postcard to remind you of the appointment. We may leave a message on your voice mail or with another member of the household.

We will share your protected health information with business associates that perform specific functions for our practice such as billing. When a business arrangement of this type requires the use of your information, we will have a written contract with the third party to protect the privacy of your protected health information.

Others Involved in Your Health Care: We must disclose your health information to you as described in the Patient Rights section of this Notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member or other person to the extent necessary to help with your health care or with payment for your health care, but only if you agree. If we determine it is in your best interest based on our professional judgment or experience with common practices, we may allow another person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays or other forms of health information.

We may use or disclose protected health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, a personal representative or any other person responsible for your care of your location, your general condition or death. If you are present prior to the use or disclosure of your protected health information, we will provide you with the opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. Finally, we may use or disclose your protected health information to an authorized public or private entity to assist in disaster relief efforts and to coordinate uses and disclosures to family members or others involved in your health care.

Emergencies: In the event of your incapacity or in emergency circumstances, we may use or disclose your protected health information to treat you.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Based upon Your Written Authorization: Other uses and disclosures of your protected health information will be made only with your written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law as described below. You may revoke this authorization, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that an action has already been taken in reliance on the authorization.

Uses and Disclosures of Health Information con't

Marketing Health-Related Services: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

Required by Law: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law.

Abuse or Neglect: We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others.

National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to authorize federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institution or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminder (such as voicemail messages, postcards, or letters).

Patient Rights

Access: You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice.)

Access: You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. If you request copies, we will charge you 0.35 for each page, \$15.00 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based for providing your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.)



Patient Rights

Disclosure Accounting: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes, other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain activities, for the last 6 years, but not before April 14, 2003. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests.

Restriction: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency).

Alternative Communication: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. (You must make your request in writing). Your request must specify the alternative means or location, and provide satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

Electronic Notice: If you receive this Notice on our Website or be electronic mail (email), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

Questions and Complaints

If you want more information about our privacy practice or have questions of concerns, please contact us.

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request. We support your right to the privacy of your health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.