



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

**Our Obligations:**

We are required by law to:

Maintain the privacy of protected health information.

Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices regarding health information about you.

Follow the terms of our notice that is currently in effect.

**How we may use and disclose health information:**

Described below are the ways we may use and disclose health information that identifies you (“Health Information”). Except for the following purposes, we will use and disclose Health Information only with your written permission. You may revoke such permission at any time by writing to our Office Administrator.

**Permitted Uses:**

We may use and disclose your Health Information for:

**Treatment.** We may use and disclose Health Information for your treatment and to provide you with treatment-related health care services. For example, we may disclose Health Information to doctors, nurses, technicians, or other personnel who are involved in your medical care and need the information to provide you with medical care. We will obtain your consent prior to releasing your Health Information to providers outside our clinic.

**Payment.** We may use and disclose Health Information so that we may bill and receive payment from you, an insurance company, or a third party for the treatment and services you received. For example, we may give your health plan information so that they will pay for your treatment. We will obtain your consent to send the necessary information to an insurance company or third party payer.

**Health Care Operations.** We may use and disclose Health Information for health care operation purposes. These uses and disclosures are necessary to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office. For example, we may use and disclose information to make sure the care you receive is of the highest quality. With your consent we also may share information with other entities that have a relationship with you (for example, your health plan) for their health care operation activities.

**Special Instructions:**

We may use and disclose your Health Information without your specific authorization for:

**Appointment Reminders, Treatment Alternatives and Health Related Benefits and Services.** We may use and disclose Health Information to contact you and to remind you that you have an appointment with us. We also may use and disclose Health Information to tell you about treatment alternatives or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

**As Required by Law.** We will disclose Health Information when required to do so by international, federal, state or local law.

**To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.** We may use and disclose Health Information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.

**Research.** We may disclose information to outside researchers, solely for purposes of medical or scientific research, after we have made reasonable efforts to disclose this intent to you. We will attempt to obtain your written authorization to such a release and you may object, in which case your record will not be released. If we have been unable to contact you, we are allowed to complete the disclosure of the information.

**Business Associates.** We may disclose Health Information to our business associates that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. For example, we may use another company to perform billing services on our behalf. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

**Public Health Risks.** We may disclose Health Information for public health activities. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; report births and deaths; report child abuse or neglect; report reactions to medications or problems with products; notify people of recalls of products they may be using; a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.

**Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose Health Information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

**Law Enforcement.** We may release Health Information if asked by a law enforcement official if the information is: (1) in response to a court order or federal grand jury subpoena; (2) limited information to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person; (3) about the victim of a crime even if, under certain very limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement; (4) about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; (5) about criminal conduct on our premises; and (6) in an emergency to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

**Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors.** We may release Health Information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We also may release Health Information to funeral directors as necessary for their duties.

**Workers' Compensation.** We may release Health Information for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

**National Security and Intelligence Activities.** We may release Health Information to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counter-intelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

**Independent Medical Examination.** We may disclose Health Information created as part of an independent medical examination to the third party who requested or paid for the examination.

*We will obtain your consent prior to use or disclosure of your Health Information for:*

**Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care.** We may share Health Information with a person who is involved in your medical care or payment for your care, such as your family or a close friend. In an emergency, we also may notify, without your consent, your family about your location or general condition or disclose such information to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort.

**Organ and Tissue Donation.** If you are an organ donor, we may use or release Health Information to organizations that handle organ procurement or other entities engaged in procurement; banking or transportation of organs, eyes, or tissues to facilitate organ, eye or tissue donation; and transplantation.

**Military and Veterans.** If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release Health Information as required by

military command authorities. We also may release Health Information to the appropriate foreign military authority if you are a member of a foreign military.

**Lawsuits and Disputes.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose, without your consent, Health Information in response to a court order or federal grand jury subpoena. We also may disclose Health Information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

**Inmates or Individuals in Custody.** If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release Health Information to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be if necessary: (1) for the institution to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or (3) the safety and security of the correctional institution.

#### **Your Rights:**

You have the following rights regarding Health Information we have about you:

**Right to Inspect and Copy.** You have a right to inspect and copy Health Information that may be used to make decisions about your care or payment for your care. This includes medical and billing records, other than psychotherapy notes. To inspect and copy this Health Information, you must make your request, in writing, to our Medical Records Department.

**Right to Amend.** If you feel that Health Information we have is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for our office. To request an amendment, you must make your request, in writing, to our Medical Records Department.

**Right to an Accounting of Disclosures.** You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we made of Health Information for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations or for which you provided written authorization. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must make your request, in writing, to our Medical Records Department.

**Right to Request Restrictions.** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the Health Information we use or disclose for treatment, payment, or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the Health Information we disclose to someone involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not share information about a particular diagnosis or treatment with your spouse. To request a restriction, you must make your request, in writing, to our Medical Records Department. If this is a greater restriction than provided by this notice, we are not required to agree to your request. If we agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

**Right to Request Confidential Communication.** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you by mail or at work. To request confidential communication, you must make your request, in writing, to our Medical Records Department. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate reasonable requests and will inform you if we are unable to comply with your request.

**Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice.** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice. To obtain a paper copy of this notice, please ask our reception staff.

#### **Changes to this Notice:**

We reserve the right to change this notice and make the new notice apply to Health Information we already have as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of our current notice at our office. The notice will contain the effective date at the bottom of each page.

#### **Complaints:**

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our office or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with our office, contact our Clinic Administrator. All complaints must be made in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.