

Notice of Privacy Practices

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.

Uses & Disclosure	Our practice collects personal health information on you that may be used for three primary purposes:
	Treatment – For example, we will prepare a record of information each time we see you in or out of the office while you are under our care. This medical record is used to keep track of changes in your condition as well as remind us of your past care, treatment, allergies and other facts relevant to your overall health. This information may be passed on to other providers as part of a coordinated health care program for you.
	Payment – We must report elements of your personal health information, such as specific treatments, visits, tests and surgeries along with related diagnoses to third party payers to properly determine benefits payable on your behalf for the services we render. We only report the minimum necessary information to process the claim.
	Health Care Operations – In order to provide you with high-quality health care we often need to be able to use your personal health information for purposes such as pre-registering you at the hospital if you ever need to be admitted, creating and transmitting a patient list for use by our nurses and physicians, or providing your pharmacy with a prescription so that it is ready to pick up when you arrive. Again, we are committed to using the minimum necessary information to achieve these purposes.
	In addition, we will use or disclose your personal health information under the following circumstances:
	When we receive a valid authorization from you
	If you give us an oral authorization and in the case of a telephone request, we can verify it is your request.
	If we are required by law to disclose your personal health information to others such as public health agencies
Required Disclosures	We are required to disclose the information to you if you request it and we are required to disclose the information to the US DHHS for compliance determinations of this practice. We may disclose information about you without your authorization for the following reasons:
	When required by law, for judicial proceedings or law enforcement
	For workers compensation
	For uses and disclosures about decedents
	Uses and disclosures for cadaveric tissue donation
	To avert a serious threat to public health or safety
	Disclosures about abuse or neglect or domestic violence
	Other uses and disclosures will be made only with your written authorization and you may revoke such authorization by writing to us at our practice address or delivering a written revocation to us in person.

	<p>We may periodically call you to remind you of appointments and we may advise you of treatment alternatives and benefits that may be of interest to you based on your health condition or status.</p>
<p>Your rights:</p>	<p>You have a right to request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your personal health information. Our practice is not obligated to accept your restrictions though. However, if we do accept the restriction it must be complied with fully on our part.</p> <p>You have a right to inspect and have a copy of your personal health information. If you would like a copy please request the information in writing or use a form available in our office for the request.</p> <p>You have a right to request amendments to your personal information. We will not amend any information we did not create nor one that we believe to be fraudulent. We are not obligated to make an amendment to your personal health information but we will include your request for the amendment as part of your personal health information.</p> <p>You have a right to an accounting for the prior six years (but no earlier than the effective date of this notification) for uses and disclosure for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations of our practice.</p> <p>You have a right to a paper copy of this notification. The current version will be provided to you at your request.</p>
<p>Our Duties:</p>	<p>We are obligated by law to protect your privacy and we will do our utmost to fulfill that duty to you. We will abide by all the terms in this notification but we reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and the personal health information it protects. You are entitled to a copy of those changes. You may always see the current notice posted in our practice lobby. We will readily make available in our lobby the most updated copy of our Privacy Notice. If you request a copy of our updated Privacy Notice and/or a copy of our HIPAA Policies and Procedures to protect patient privacy, in person, by telephone, or by e-mail, we will honor that request.</p>
	<p>We will do our very best to make certain your rights are protected and we carry out our responsibilities to you. If you have any complaint <u>we encourage you to contact our Office Manager first</u>. It is our sincere desire to preserve your privacy and fulfill our duties. We will take no retaliatory action against any person for exercising their right to the resolution of a grievance. To the contrary we encourage your comments and criticisms.</p> <p>If we cannot resolve the issue for you, you have the right to file a grievance and make a complaint to the US Department of Health & Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C., 20201 (877-696-6775)</p> <p>To make a complaint or ask any questions concerning this policy please contact the Office Manager directly at 704-786-1104</p>
<p>Effective Date</p>	<p>April 14, 2003</p>