

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.

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) requires all health care records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed to us in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, be kept confidential. This federal law gives you, the patient, significant new rights to understand and control how your health information is used. HIPPA provides penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information. As required by HIPPA, we have prepared this explanation of how we are required to maintain the privacy of your health information and how we may use and disclose your health information.

Without specific written authorization, we are permitted to use and disclose your health care records for the purposes of treatment, payment and health care operations:

- Treatment means providing, coordination, or managing health care and related services by one or more healthcare providers.
- Payment means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing or collection activities and utilization review.
- Health Care Operations include the business aspects of running our practice, such as conducting quality assessment and improvement activities, auditing functions, cost-management analysis, and customer service.

In addition, your confidential information may be used to remind you of an appointment (by phone or mail) or provide you with information about treatment alternatives or other health related services. Any other uses and disclosures will be made only with your written authorization. You may revoke such authorization in writing and we are required to honor and abide by that written request, except to the extent that we have already taken actions relying on your authorization.

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information.

This notice is effective as of April 2003 and we are required to abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of our Notice of Privacy Practices and to make the new notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. Revisions to our Notice of Privacy Practices will be posted on the effective date and you may request a written copy of the revised notice from this office.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the practice or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be made in writing.