

## Notice Of Privacy Practices

A federal regulation called HIPAA requires that you be given information about how your personal health information is handled. The Act requires so much information, in fact, that it's hard to swallow all at once. This notice will tell you about the things you *really need to know*, while staying short enough that I hope you'll actually read and understand it.

#1. A record will be made of what we talk about. You are encouraged to take a copy. There is no other record. You can request corrections or additions, just ask. You can be in charge of sending the record to other doctors, or anyone else who tells you or me they want it.

I will not send it out, or provide information about you to someone on the phone, without your written permission. (I do routinely *take* information without a "release", using care not to *reveal* information in the process; for example, family members may send email or leave voicemail about you if they wish.) There are two main exceptions to this:

**Legal:** a court may subpoena your records, which means they are forcing me to give information about you, including talking to some opposing attorney on the telephone or even in court. You get to object first, in court if necessary. The HIPAA rule also says "law enforcement" may request information for public safety purposes; these requests will be handled with great restraint and skepticism.

**Danger:** if you or someone else is in danger, a health provider is *required* to reveal information about you *if* it is thought necessary to protect you or another person.

#2. A large number of people may handle the paperwork associated with your insurance claims: billing people, clearinghouses who polish the paperwork, and those who actually send the check. However, there is generally no reason for these people to look at or ask for any details about your situation. These people will see a diagnosis and evidence of treatment only.

A few will see more information, including your symptoms, medications, and response to treatment (the "utilization review" people). As often as possible these people will see "de-identified" information, with your name, address, family or doctor's names, etc. removed.

There is more to this story, including information about how electronic transfers of information are to be protected. Read more on the website under [Privacy](#); [Security](#); and [Confidentiality](#) – and you may request copies of those pages. You may write concerns to me -- without retaliation -- or to the government: write the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave S.W. , Washington D.C. 20201 .

You may request more information if the web pages are not enough to satisfy your concerns, or not accessible. If any of this information changes, it will appear on the website under "What's New". Let me know if you need a direct notice.

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(Name – please print)

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(Signature)

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(Date)