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## **FEDERAL HEALTH PRIVACY RULE**

### **Privacy Rule**

The Federal Government has developed regulations in an attempt to ensure the health care privacy of patients. This means that we cannot use or disclose health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or health care operations without your written consent. As part of these regulations, we are required to inform you how this office utilizes, shares and protects the health care information we collect.

### **What Information We Share**

In the course of treating you, information gathered regarding your health may be shared with a hospital that will be the setting for your health care, with a medical laboratory that will be performing a test on you, with a medical supply company that will be providing you with a medical apparatus, with another medical facility that may be performing some form of therapy on you at our request, and with medical students and/or residents who function within our practice. For example, when our office submits the necessary forms to the hospital for a proposed surgery, any medical information that the doctor believes to be relevant to your health care will be included. This information may be seen by various doctors, nurses, and support staff in the course of their duties.

### **Protecting Your Health Care Information**

Our policies to protect your personal health care information are:

1. Office personnel and residents have been instructed not to discuss any information that is gathered on patients.
2. A meeting is held periodically to review our protection policies and re-educate our personnel as to the importance of patient privacy.
3. All medical records are accounted for at the close of a business day and are secured.
4. No medical records are allowed to be taken from our office, unless accompanied by the treating doctor.
5. No medical records will be sent to another doctor or health care facility without the written approval of the patient.
6. Only that medical information that is necessary will be shared with another health care facility or laboratory in order that they can perform their task.
7. All medical information obtained that is no longer useable, will be shredded prior to being disposed.

### **Your Rights Under the Federal Health Policy Rule**

1. You may revoke this consent at any time.
2. You may have access to your medical records. This request must be made in writing and the office must allow you access within 5 working days following receipt of your request. If you request a copy of your records, the office must furnish this to you within 15 days of receiving your request. The office may charge 25 cents per page as well as labor costs of copying the documents and postage.
3. You may submit a written request to amend your medical record if you believe your medical record is incorrect or incomplete. The office must comply with this request within 60 days after receiving your request.
4. If you believe that your right to privacy has been compromised, you may contact our office directly, and we will make every attempt to correct the problem. You may also get further information online at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipsa> to learn more about the privacy rule and making a complaint.