

HIPAA NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.

PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY. THE PRIVACY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.

This Notice of Privacy describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations (TPO) and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information, that may identify you and that relates to your past, present or future dental condition and related health care services. This notice takes effect April 14, 2003, and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided such applicable law permits the changes. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make the new notice available upon request.

You may request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your dentist, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, to support the operation of the dentist's practice, and any other use required by law.

Treatment: We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, we would disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to a home health agency that provides care to you. Another example, your protected health information may be provided to a dentist specialist to whom you have been referred to ensure that the dental specialist has the necessary information to diagnose or treat you.

Payment: Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your health care services. For example, obtaining approval for the hospital admission.

Healthcare Operations: We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of your dentist's practice. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conduction or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the front desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your dentist. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your dentist is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required by Law, Public Health issues as required by law, Communicable Diseases: Health Oversight: Abuse or Neglect: Food and Drug Administration requirements: Legal Proceedings: Law Enforcement: Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation: Research: Criminal Activity: Military Activity and National Security: Workers' Compensation: Inmates: Required Uses and Disclosures: Under that law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirement of Section 164.500.

To You and Your Family: We may disclose your health information to a family member, who is financially responsible to the extent necessary to help with your health care or with payment of your health care. Before we disclose your health information to these people, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to our use or disclosure. If you are not present, or in the event of your incapacity or an emergency, we will disclose your dental information based on our professional judgment of whether the

disclosure would be in your best interest. We may use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information. We may use or disclose information about you to notify or assist in notifying a person involved in your care of your location and general condition.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards, letters, text or email messages).

Disaster Relief: We may use or disclose your health information to a public or private entity authorized by law or by its charter to assist in disaster relief efforts.

Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures: Will be made only with your Consent, Authorization or Opportunity to object unless required by law.

Revoke This Authorization: At any time, in writing, you may revoke this authorization, except to the extent that your dentist or dental practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

YOUR RIGHTS following is a statement of your rights with respect to your protected health information.

You have the right to inspect and copy your protected health information: Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records: psychotherapy notes; information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding; and protected health information that is subject to law that prohibits access to protected health information.

You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information: This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply.

Your dentist is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If the dentist believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of your protected health information, your protected health information will not be restricted. You then have the right to use another healthcare professional.

You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location. You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, upon request, even if you have agreed to accept this notice alternatively (i.e. electronically).

You may have the right to have your dentist amend your protected health information. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information.

We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and will inform you by mail of any changes. You then have the right to object or withdraw as provided in this notice.

Complaints: You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying our privacy contact of your complaint. **We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.**

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of, and provide individuals with, this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. If you have any objections to this form, please ask to speak with our HIPAA Compliance Officer in person or by phone at our main phone number.