

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

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**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 (HIPAA) is a federal program that requires that all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed by us in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, are kept properly confidential. This Act gives you, the patient, significant new rights to understand and control how your health information is used. HIPAA provides penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information.

As required by HIPAA 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.

We may use and disclose your medical records only for the following purposes: treatment, payment, and health care operations.

- Treatment means providing, coordinating, or managing health care and related services by one or more health care providers. This includes the physical examination, scheduling other exams or appointments with other providers, calling in prescription refills, physician-to-physician discussion for coordination of care and physician to staff discussion for coordination of care.
- Payment means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing or collection activities, and utilization review. An example of this would be sending a bill to your insurance company for payment.
- Health care operations include the business aspects of running our practice on a daily basis. These functions include, the entire staff having access to your file to obtain authorization of medications or medical procedures, filing of paperwork, recording phone messages or vitals from your visit, confirming your appointments with our office, scheduling your appointments with our office and obtaining the medical complaint for your visit, writing referrals for other physicians, and dictating notes to an outside source of your visit.

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 reserve the right to update these practices at any give time. You will then be required to review and resign acknowledging the changes and consenting to the changes.

You have the following rights with respect to your protected health information, which you can exercise by presenting a written request to the Privacy Officer:

- Close personal friends, or any other person identified by you. We are however, not required to agree to a requested restriction, we must abide by it unless you agree in writing to remove it.

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- The right to reasonable requests to receive confidential communications of protected health information from us by alternative means or alternative locations.
  - The right to inspect and copy your protected health information.
  - The right to amend your protected health information.
  - The right to receive an accounting of disclosures of protected health information.
  - The right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us upon request.

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 October 16, 2002, and we are required to abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices and to make the new notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. We will post and you may request a written copy of the revised Notice of Privacy Practices from this office.

You have recourse if you feel that your privacy protections have been violated. You have the right to file a formal, written complaint with our office or with the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, about violations of the provisions of this notice or the policies and procedures of our office. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Please contact us for more information, by asking to speak to our Privacy Officer or for written inquires, note "Attention Privacy Officer" at:

**Virginia Spine Institute, P.L.C.**  
**1831 Wiehle Avenue Second Floor**  
**Reston, VA 20190**  
**703.709.1114**  
**(Fax) 703.709.1117**

For more information about HIPAA or to file a complaint:

**The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**  
**Office of Civil Rights**  
**200 Independence Avenue, S. W.**  
**Washington, D.C. 20201**  
**(202) 619-0257, or Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775**