

HAUSER CLINIC AND ASSOCIATES 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 THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact Luann Lathrop, Office Manager of our office at 713-669-0303, 5959 West Loop South, Suite 600, Bellaire, Texas 77401.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE

This notice describes information about privacy practices followed by our physicians, staff and other office personnel.

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

This notice applies to the information and records we have about your health, health status, and the healthcare and services you receive at this or any other of our offices.

We are required by law to give you this notice. It will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose health information about you and describes your rights and our obligations regarding the use and disclosure of that information.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

We must have your written, signed Consent to use and disclose health information for the following purposes:

For Treatment. We may use health information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose health information about you to doctors, nurses, medical assistants, technicians, office staff, business office staff and other personnel who are involved in taking care of you and your health.

Different personnel in our office may share information about you and disclose information to people who do not work in our office in order to coordinate your care, such as phoning in prescriptions to your pharmacy, scheduling lab work and ordering X-rays. Family members and other healthcare providers may be part of your medical care outside this office and may require information about you that we have.

For Payment. We may use and disclose health information about you so that the treatment and services you receive at this office may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party.

Quality Healthcare Services. We may use and disclose health information about you in order to run the office and make sure that you and our other patients receive quality care.

Appointment Reminders. We may contact you by telephone as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment, testing or other medical care services at our office. If you provide us with a telephone number that has an automated answering feature, we will leave a recorded reminder regarding your appointment.

Treatment Alternatives. We may tell you about health-related products or services that may be of interest to you.

You may revoke your Consent at any time by giving us written notice. Your revocation will be effective when we receive it, but it will not apply to any uses and disclosures that occurred before that time. If you do revoke your Consent, we will not be permitted to use or disclose information for purposes of treatment or payment, and we may therefore choose to discontinue providing you with healthcare treatment and services.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

We may use or disclose health information about you without your permission for the following purposes, subject to all applicable legal requirements and limitations:

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may use and disclose health information about you when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person.

Required By Law. We will disclose health information about you when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

Military, Veteran, National Security and Intelligence. If you are or were a member of the armed forces, or part of the national security or intelligence communities, we may be required by military command or other government authorities to release health information about you. We may release information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

Workers' Compensation. We may release health information about you for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

Public Health Risks. We may disclose health information about you for public health reasons in order to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; or report suspected abuse or neglect, non-accidental physical injuries, reactions to medications or problems with products.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for audits, investigations, inspections, or licensing purposes. These disclosures may be necessary for certain state and federal agencies to monitor the healthcare system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuit and Disputes. If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose health information about you in response to a court or administrative order. Subject to all applicable legal requirements, we may also disclose health information about you in response to a subpoena.

Law Enforcement. We may release health information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process, subject to all applicable legal requirements.

Coroners and Medical Examiners. We may release health information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death.

Information Not Personally Identifiable. We may use or disclose health information about you in a way that does not personally identify you or reveal who you are.

Family and Friends. We may disclose health information about you to your family members or friends if we obtain your verbal agreement to do so or if we give you an opportunity to object to such a disclosure and you do not raise an objection. We may also disclose health information to your family or friends if we can infer from the circumstances, based on our professional judgment that you would not object. For Example, we may assume you agree to our disclosure of your personal health information to your spouse when you bring your spouse with you into the exam room during treatment or while treatment is discussed.

In situations where you are not capable of giving consent (because you are not present or due to your incapacity or medical emergency), we may, using our professional judgment, determine that a disclosure to your family member or friend is in your best interest. In that situation, we will disclose only health information relevant to the person's involvement in your care.

OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We will not use or disclose your health information for any purpose other than those identified in the previous sections without your specific, written *Authorization*. We must obtain your *Authorization* separate from any *Consent* we may have obtained from you.

If we have HIV or substance abuse information about you, we cannot release that information without a special signed, written authorization from you.

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

You have the following rights regarding health information we maintain about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy. You have the right to inspect and copy your health information, such as medical and billing records, that we use to make decisions about your care. You must submit a written request to Brenda Daniel, Office Supervisor in order to inspect and/or copy your health information. If you request a copy of the information, we will require that you pay, in advance, for the costs of copying, mailing and other associated costs. The cost will be determined depending on the number of copies.

Right to Amend. If you believe health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment as long as the information is kept by this office.

To request a amendment, complete and submit a Medical Record Amendment/Correction Form to Brenda Daniel, Office Supervisor. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include the reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

- a) We did not create, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment.

- b) Is not part of the health information that we keep.
- c) You would not be permitted to inspect and copy.
- d) Is accurate and complete.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request an “accounting of disclosures.” This is a list of the disclosures we made of medical information about you for purposes other than treatment, payment and healthcare operations. To obtain this list, you must submit your request in writing to Brenda Daniel, Office Supervisor. Your request must state a time period, which may not be longer than six years and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list. We will inform you of the cost of providing the list and request payment in advance of providing the list.

Right to Request Restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for it, like a family member or friend.

We are Not Required to Agree to Your Request. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide emergency treatment.

To request restrictions, you may complete and submit the Request For Restriction On Use/ Disclosure Of medical Information to Brenda Daniel, Office Supervisor.

Right to Request Confidential Communications. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location.

To request confidential communications, you may complete and submit the Request For Restriction On Use/Disclosure Of Medical Information And/Or Confidential Communication to Brenda Daniel, Office Supervisor. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to a paper copy of this notice.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

We reserve the right to change this notice, and to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a summary of the current notice in the office with its effective date.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our office. To file a complaint with our office, contact Kristyn Sayroo Administrator, 713-271-7181 extension 111. Or, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.