

George J. Mendel, DMD
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.

OUR LEGAL DUTY

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice while it is in effect. This notice takes effect 4\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 changes are permitted by applicable law. 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

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. For example: **Treatment:** We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you. **Payment:** We may use or disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. **Healthcare Operations:** We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing, or credentialing activities.

Your Authorization: In addition to our use of your health information or treatment, payment, or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosure permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this notice.

To your family and friends: We must disclose your health information to you, as described in the Patient Rights section of this notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member, friend, or other person to the extent necessary to help with your healthcare or with payment for your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so.

Persons involved in care: We may use or disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition, or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgement disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also 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.

Marketing Health-Related Services: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

Required By Law: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law. Abuse or Neglect: We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others. We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under any circumstances. We may disclose to authorized federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances. We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders such as voice mails, postcards, or letters.

PATIENT RIGHTS

You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. We will charge you a reasonable cost based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. If you request copies, we will charge you \$5.00 per page, \$12.00 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want the copies mailed. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee. Contact Dr. Mendel for additional fees involved based on information requested. Disclosure Accounting: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain other activities for the last 5 years. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12 month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests. Restrictions: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use of disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency.) Alternative Communication: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternating means or to alternative locations. (You must make your request in writing.) Your request must specify the alternative means or location you request. Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing and must include the way the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances. Electronic notice: If you receive this notice on our Web site or electronic mail, or written form. Questions or Complaints: If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us.

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights or you disagree with a decision we made about your access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use of disclosure of your health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of the notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request. We support your right to the privacy of your health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint.

Contact Officer: George J. Mendel, DMD

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