

HIPAA 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 carefully

This Privacy Notice is being provided to you as a requirement of a federal law, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This Privacy Notice describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information in some cases. Your "protected health information" means any written and oral health information about you, including demographic data that can be used to identify you. This is health information that is created or received by your health provider, and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition.

This notice takes effect on April 1, 2003 and remains in effect until we replace it.

1. OUR PLEDGE REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION

The privacy of your medical information is important to us. We understand that your medical information is personal and we are committed to protecting it. We create a record of the care and services you receive at our organization. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice will tell you about the ways we may use and share medical information about you. We also describe your rights and certain duties we have regarding the use and disclosure of medical information

2. OUR LEGAL DUTY

The Law Requires Us to:

- Keep your medical information private
- Give you this notice describing our legal duties, privacy practices, and your rights regarding your medical information.
- Follow the terms of the notice that is now in effect.

We Have the Right To:

- Change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided that law permits the changes.
- Make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all medical information that we keep, including information previously created or received before the changes.

Notice Of Change To Privacy Practices:

- Before we make an important change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make the new notice available upon request.
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3. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

The following section describes different ways that we use and disclose medical information. Not every use or disclosure will be listed. However, we have listed all of the different ways we are permitted to use and disclose medical information. We will not use or disclose your medical information for any purpose not listed below, without your specific written authorization.

FOR TREATMENT: We may use medical information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to doctors, nurses or technicians, medical students, or other people who are taking care of you. We may also share medical information about you to your other health care providers to assist them in treating you.

FOR PAYMENT: We may use and disclose your medical information for payment purposes.

FOR HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS: We may use and disclose your medical information for our health care operations. This might include measuring and improving quality, evaluating the performance of employees, conducting training programs, and getting accreditation, certificates, licenses and credentials that we need to serve you.

ADDITIONAL USES AND DISCLOSURES: In addition to using and disclosing your medical information for treatment, payment and health care operations, we may use and disclose medical information for the following purposes:

Notification: Medical information to notify or to help notify a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care. We will share information about your location, general condition or death. If you are present, we will get your permission, if possible, before we share or give you the opportunity to refuse permission. In case of emergency, and if you are not able to give or refuse permission, we will share only the health information that is directly necessary for your health care, according to our professional judgment.

Disaster Relief: Medical information with a public or private organization or person who can legally assist in disaster relief efforts.

Research in Limited Circumstances: Medical information for research purposes in limited circumstances where the research has been approved by a review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of medical information.

Funeral Director, Coroner Medical Examiner: To help them carry out their duties, we may share the medical information of a person who has died with a coroner, medical examiner, funeral director, or an organ procurement organization.

Specialized Government Function: Subject to certain requirements, we may disclose or use health information for military personnel and veterans, for national security and intelligence activities, for protective services for the President and others, for medical suitability determinations for the Department of State, for correctional institutions and other law enforcement custodial situations, and for government programs providing public benefits.

Court Orders and Judicial Administrative Proceedings: We may disclose medical information in response to a court or administrative order, subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process, under certain circumstances. Under limited circumstances, such as court order, warrant, or grand jury subpoena, we may share your medical information with law enforcement officials.

Public Health Activities: As required by law, we may disclose your medical information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability, including child abuse or neglect. We also may disclose your medical information to persons subject to jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration for purposes of reporting adverse events associated with product defects or problems, to enable product recalls, repairs or replacements, to track products, or to conduct activities required by the Food and Drug Administration.

Victims of Abuse, Neglect, or Domestic Violence: We may disclose medical 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 share your medical information if it is necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or the health and safety of others. We may share medical information when necessary to help law enforcement officials capture a person who has admitted to being part of a crime or has escaped from legal custody.

Workers Compensation: We may disclose health information when authorized and necessary to comply with laws relating to workers compensation or other similar programs.

Health Oversight Activities: We may disclose medical information to an agency providing health oversight for oversight activities authorized by law, including audits, civil, administrative, or criminal investigations or proceedings, inspections, licensure or disciplinary actions, or other authorized activities.

Law Enforcement: Under certain circumstances, we may disclose health information to law enforcement officials. These circumstances include reporting required by certain laws (such as the reporting of certain types of wounds), pursuant to certain subpoenas or court orders, reporting limited information concerning identification and location at the request of a law enforcement official, reporting death, crimes on our premises, and crimes in emergencies.

request must be made in writing to the contact person listed at the end of this notice.

6. Request that we change your medical information. We may deny your request if we did not create the information you want changed or for certain other reasons. If we deny your request, we will provide you with a written explanation. You may respond with a statement of disagreement that will be added to the information you wanted changed. If we accept your request to change the information, we will make reasonable efforts to tell others, including people you name, of the change and to include the changes in any future sharing of that information.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you have any questions about this notice or if you think that we may have violated your privacy rights, please contact us. You may also submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint.

CONTACT PERSON

The facility's contact person for all issues regarding patient privacy and your rights under the federal privacy standards is the Privacy Officer;

George W. Commons, M.D., F.A.C.S
1515 El Camino Real, Suite C
Palo Alto, CA 94306
ATTN: Privacy Officer

The Privacy Officer can be contacted by telephone at 650-328-4570

4. YOUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

You Have A Right To:

1. You may inspect and obtain a copy of your protected health information that is contained in a designated record set for as long as we maintain the protected health information. A "designated record set" contains medical and billing records and any other records that your surgeon and the facility use for making decisions about you.
Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records: psychotherapy notes, information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or for use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding; and protected health information that is subject to a law that prohibits access to protected health information. Depending on the circumstances, you may have the right to have a decision to deny access reviewed. We may deny your request to inspect or copy your protected health information.
2. To inspect and copy your medical information, you must submit a written request to this Privacy Officer, whose contact information is listed on the last page of the Privacy Notice. If you request a copy of your information, we may charge you a fee.
3. Receive a list of all the times we or our business associates shared your medical information for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations and other specified exceptions.
4. Request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your medical information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions.
5. Request that we communicate with you about your medical information by different means or to different locations. Your