

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

The Women's Health Group, P.C.

Effective 4/14/03

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.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRIVACY

We understand the importance of keeping your personal and health information secure and private. We are committed to protecting health information about you. This notice informs you of your rights about the privacy of your personal information and how we may use and share your personal information. We will make sure that your personal information is only used and shared in the manner described.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION

Following are descriptions of the ways we may use and disclose health information that identifies you. Except for the following purposes, we will disclose health information only with your permission.

Treatment. We may use and disclose health information to treat you and to provide you with treatment-related health care services. This could be with providers such as doctors, nurses, technicians, or such others outside our office who are involved with and need information about your medical care.

Payment. We may use and disclose health information so that we or others may bill and receive payment from you, an insurance company, or a third party for the treatment and services you received. For example, we may give your health plan information so that they will pay for your treatment.

Health Care Operations. We may use and disclose health information for health care operation purposes. These uses and disclosures are necessary to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office. For example, we may use and disclose information to make sure the obstetric or gynecologic care you receive is of the highest quality. We also may share information with other entities that have a relationship with you, such as your health plan, for their health care operation activities.

Appointment Reminders, Treatment Alternatives, and Health-Related Benefits and Services. We may use and disclose health information to contact you and to remind you that you have an appointment with us. We also may use and disclose health information to tell you about treatment alternatives or health related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. When appropriate, we may share health information with a person who is involved in your medical care or payment for your care, such as your family or a close friend. We also may notify your family about your location or general condition or disclose such information to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

For Obstetric Patients. For purposes of proper medical treatment, this OB/GYN practice will give the personal health information, including medical history and all test and lab results of all pregnant patients directly to the birthing hospital, baby's pediatrician, and other specialists needed for the baby's care. The hospital, pediatrician, and any other needed specialist may make the patient's personal health information part of their medical record for the patient's baby. Transfer of this information will help hospital staff, the pediatrician, and other needed specialist appropriately care for and treat a patient's newborn baby.

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

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may use and disclose health information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.

Business Associates. We may disclose health information to our business associates, such as an outside billing service, that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

Organ and Tissue Donation. If you are an organ donor, we may release health information to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye, or tissue transplantation or to an organ donation bank, as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

Military and Veterans. If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release health information as required by military command authorities. We also may release health information to the appropriate foreign military authority if you are a member of a foreign military.

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

Public Health Risks. We may disclose health information for public health activities. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury, or disability; report births and deaths; report child abuse or neglect; report reactions to medications or problems with products; notify people of recalls of products they may be using; inform a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and report to the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree or when required or authorized by law.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits and Disputes. If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose health information in response to a court or administrative order. We also may disclose health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

Law Enforcement. We may release health information if asked by a law enforcement official if the information is 1) in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons, or similar process; 2) limited information to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive material witness, or missing person; 3) about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; 5) about criminal conduct on our premises; and 6) in an emergency to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity, description, or location of the person who committed the crime.

Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors. 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. We also may release health information to funeral directors as necessary for their duties.

National Security and Intelligence Activities. We may disclose health information to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counter-intelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

Protective Services for the President and Others. We may disclose health information to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized persons or foreign heads of state, or to conduct special investigations.

Inmates or Individuals in Custody. If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release health information to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be made if necessary: 1) for the institution to provide you with health care, 2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others, or 3) for the safety and security of the correctional institute.

YOUR RIGHTS

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

Right to Inspect and Copy. You have the right to inspect and copy health information that may be used to make decisions about your care or payment for your care. Usually this includes health and billing records. To inspect and copy health information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must make your request, in writing, to Deena Marchant, Privacy Officer for The Women's Health Group, P.C. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing, or other supplies and services associated with your request.

Right to Amend. If you feel that health information we have is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as we keep the information. To request an amendment, your request must be made, in writing, to Deena Marchant, Privacy Officer for The Women's Health Group, P.C. Your written request should include a reason that supports your request for an amendment. *We may deny your request* for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, *we may deny your request* for other reasons including, but not limited to, portions of the

medical record not created by providers in this office or information that is already complete and accurate.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we made of health information for purposes other than treatment, payment, and health care operations or for which you provided written authorization. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must make your request, in writing, to Deena Marchant, Privacy Officer for The Women's Health Group, P.C.

Right to Request Restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information we use or disclose for treatment, payment, or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information we disclose to someone involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not share information about a particular diagnosis or treatment with your spouse. To request a restriction, you must make your request, in writing, to Deena Marchant, Privacy Officer for The Women's Health Group, P.C. *We are not required to agree with your request if it is not feasible for us to ensure our compliance or believe it will negatively impact the care we may provide you.* If we agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

Right to Request Confidential Communication. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we contact you only by mail or at work. To request confidential communication, you must make your request, in writing, to Deena Marchant, Privacy Officer for The Women's Health Group P.C. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate reasonable requests.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

We reserve the right to change this notice and make the new notice apply to health information we already have as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of our current notice at our office. The notice will contain the effective date on the first page.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our office or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be made in writing. **You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.**

Updated 03/05/09/sl