

Notice of Privacy Policy and Procedures

As required by the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), The Center for Plastic Surgery (Practice) may not use or disclose your personal health information without your authorization.

THE PRACTICE HAS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO COMPLY WITH HIPAA LAW. EVERY ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO KEEP THE PROCESS FOR PATIENTS AND STAFF AS EFFICIENT AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, THE REQUIREMENTS ARE EXTENSIVE AND TAKE TIME, EFFORT AND COOPERATION TO PROCESS REQUIRED TASKS.

All patients are presented with certain notices and must sign certain forms. Depending on the course of treatment, some patients may be required to sign additional forms. The following is a summary of the most common notices and forms:

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.

Consent for the Use or Disclosure of Protected Health Information – The Practice may not use or disclose your health information without your authorization. Your signature on this form indicates that you are giving permission for the use and disclosure of your health information for the purposes of treatment, payment and health care operations. You may revoke this authorization at any time by signing and dating the revocation section on your copy of this form and returning to this office.

Authorization for Use or Disclosure of Protected Health Information – The Practice may not use or disclose your health information without your authorization. Your signature on this form indicates that you are giving permission to the people listed on the form, for the use and disclosure of the health information listed on the form, for the purposes listed on the form, to the people/organizations listed on the form. You may revoke this authorization at any time by signing and dating the revocation section on your copy of this form and returning to this office.

Complaint – You have the right to complain about the Practice’s privacy policies, procedures or actions. The Practice will not engage in any discriminatory or other retaliatory behavior against you because of a complaint.

Request to Amend Protected Health Information - You have a right to request that health information that pertains to you be amended if you believe that it is incorrect or incomplete. The Practice will review your request and either grant your request or explain the reason why it will not be granted. In the event that your request is not granted, you have the right to submit a statement of disagreement that will accompany the information in question for all future disclosures.

Request for Inspection of Protected Health Information - You have a right to request the opportunity to inspect and copy health information that pertains to you. The Practice will evaluate your request and will either grant it or explain the reason why the request will not be granted. In the event that your inspection request is not granted, you may request that the decision be reviewed by someone other than the person who originally denied the request.

Request for Accounting of Disclosures of Protected Health Information - You have a right to request an accounting of disclosures of health information that pertains to you.

Confidential Channel Communication Request - You have a right to request that communications concerning your personal health information be made through confidential channels. The Practice will do its best to accommodate all reasonable requests.

Designation of Personal Representative - You have a right to nominate one or more persons to act on your behalf with respect to the protection of health information that pertains to you. By making this request, you are informing the Practice of your wish to designate the named person as your personal representative. You may revoke this designation at any time by signing and dating the revocation of your copy of this form and returning it to this office.

Notice of Health Information Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

*****Introduction*****

At The Center for Plastic Surgery, we are committed to treating and using protected health information about you responsibly. This Notice of Health Information Practices describes the personal information we collect, and how and when we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your protected health information. This Notice is effective March 6, 2003 and applies to all protected health information as defined by federal regulations.

Understanding Your Health Record/Information

Each time you visit The Center for Plastic Surgery, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, and a plan for future care or treatment. This information, often referred to as your health or medical record, serves as a:

- Basis for planning your care and treatment,
- Means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care,
- Legal document describing the care you received,
- Means by which you or a third-party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided,
- A tool in educating health professionals,
- A source of data for medical research,
- A source of information for public health officials charged with improving the health of this state and the nation,
- A source of data for our planning and marketing,
- A tool with which we can assess and continually work to improve the care we render and the outcomes we achieve,

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to: ensure its accuracy, better understand who, what, when, where, and why others may access your health information, and make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others

Your Health Information Rights

Although your health record is the physical property of The Center for Plastic Surgery the information belongs to you. You have the right to:

- Obtain a paper copy of this notice of information practices upon request,
- Inspect and copy your health record as provided for in 45 CFR 164.524,
- Amend your health record as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Request communications of your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations,
 - Request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information as provided by 45 CFR 164.522, and
 - Revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken.

Our Responsibilities

The Center for Plastic Surgery is required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information,
- Provide you with this notice as to our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you,
- Abide by the terms of this notice,
- Notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction, and
- Accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. Should our information practices change, we will mail a revised notice to the address you've supplied us, or if you agree, we will email the revised notice to you.

We will not use or disclose your health information without your authorization, except as described in this notice. We will also discontinue to use or disclose your health information after we have received a written revocation of the authorization according to the procedures included in the authorization.

For More Information or to Report a Problem

If have questions and would like additional information, you may contact the practice's Privacy Officer, Susan E. Clary at 719-634-0107.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can file a complaint with the practice's Privacy Officer, or with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint with either the Privacy Officer or the Office for Civil Rights. The address for the OCR is listed below:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

Examples of Disclosures for Treatment, Payment and Health Operations

We will use your health information for treatment.

For example: Information obtained by a nurse, physician, or other member of your health care team will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of treatment that should work best for you. Your physician will document in your record his or her expectations of the members of your health care team. Members of your health care team will then record the actions they took and their observations. In that way, the physician will know how you are responding to treatment.

We will also provide your physician or a subsequent health care provider with copies of various reports that should assist him or her in treating you once you're discharged from this hospital.

We will use your health information for payment.

For example: A bill may be sent to you or a third-party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedures, and supplies used.

We will use your health information for regular health operations.

For example: Members of the medical staff, the risk or quality improvement manager, or members of the quality improvement team may use information in your health record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information will then be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and service we provide.

Business associates: There are some services provided in our organization through contacts with business associates. Examples include physician services in the emergency department and radiology, certain laboratory tests, and a copy service we use when making copies of your health record. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associate so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. To protect your health information, however, we require the business associate to appropriately safeguard your information.

Directory: Unless you notify us that you object, we will use your name, location in the facility, general condition, and religious affiliation for directory purposes. This information may be provided to members of the clergy and, except for religious affiliation, to other people who ask for you by name.

Notification: We may use or disclose information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care, your location, and general condition.

Communication with family: Health professionals, using their best judgment, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.

Research: We may disclose information to researchers when their research has been approved by an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your health information.

Funeral directors: We may disclose health information to funeral directors consistent with applicable law to carry out their duties.

Organ procurement organizations: Consistent with applicable law, we may disclose health information to organ procurement organizations or other entities engaged in the procurement, banking, or transplantation of organs for the purpose of tissue donation and transplant.

Marketing: We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Fund raising: We may contact you as part of a fund-raising effort.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA): We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse events with respect to food, supplements, product and product defects, or post marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs, or replacement.

Workers compensation: We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to workers compensation or other similar programs established by law.

Public health: As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability.

Correctional institution: Should you be an inmate of a correctional institution, we may disclose to the institution or agents thereof health information necessary for your health and the health and safety of other individuals.

Law enforcement: We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena.

Federal law makes provision for your health information to be released to an appropriate health oversight agency, public health authority or attorney, provided that a work force member or business associate believes in good faith that we have engaged in unlawful conduct or have otherwise violated professional or clinical standards and are potentially endangering one or more patients, workers or the public.

Notice of Privacy Policies Revision Number _____.