

Triangle Implant Center -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 it carefully.

If you have any questions about this Notice please contact Triangle Implant Center in Durham. 919-806-2912
www.triangleimplantcenter.com

Revised: September 13, 2018

This is an update of our notice which originally went into effect 2007

We are committed to protect the privacy of your personal health information (PHI).

This Notice of Privacy Practices (Notice) describes how we may use within our practice or network and disclose (share outside of our practice or network) your PHI to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations. We may also share your information for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. This Notice also describes your rights to access and control your PHI.

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your PHI. We will follow the terms outlined in this Notice.

We may change our Notice, at any time. Any changes will apply to all PHI. Upon your request, we will provide you with any revised Notice by:

- Posting the new Notice in our office.
- If requested, making copies of the new Notice available in our office or by mail.
- Posting the revised Notice on our website: www.triangleimplantcenter.com

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

We may also share your PHI from time-to-time to another physician or health care provider (e.g., a specialist or laboratory) who, at the request of your physician, becomes involved in your care by providing assistance with your health care diagnosis or treatment to your physician.

We may use and disclose your PHI to obtain payment for services. We may provide your PHI to others in order to bill or collect payment for services. There may be services for which we share information with your health plan to determine if the service will be paid for.

PHI may be shared with the following:

- Billing companies
- Insurance companies, health plans
- Government agencies in order to assist with qualification of benefits
- Collection agencies

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.

We may use and disclose your PHI in other situations without your permission:

- **If required by law:** The use or disclosure will be made in compliance with the law and will be limited to the relevant requirements of the law. For example, we may be required to report gunshot wounds or suspected abuse or neglect.
- **Public health activities:** The disclosure will be made for the purpose of controlling disease, injury or disability and only to public health authorities permitted by law to collect or receive information. We may also notify individuals who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition.
- **Health oversight agencies:** We may disclose protected health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, such as audits, investigations, and inspections. Oversight agencies seeking this information include government agencies that oversee the health care system, government benefit programs, other government regulatory programs and civil rights laws.
- **Legal proceedings:** To assist in any legal proceeding or in response to a court order, in certain conditions in response to a subpoena, or other lawful process.
- **Police or other law enforcement purposes:** The release of PHI will meet all applicable legal requirements for release.
- **Coroners, funeral directors:** We may disclose protected health information to a coroner or medical examiner for identification purposes, determining cause of death or for the coroner or medical examiner to perform other duties authorized by law
- **Medical research:** We may disclose your protected health 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 protected health information.
- **Special government purposes:** Information may be shared for national security purposes, or if you are a member of the military, to the military under limited circumstances.
- **Correctional institutions:** Information may be shared if you are an inmate or under custody of law which is necessary for your health or the health and safety of other individuals.
- **Workers' Compensation:** Your protected health information may be disclosed by us as authorized to comply with workers' compensation laws and other similar legally-established programs.
- **Abuse or Neglect:** We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim or 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.

Other uses and disclosures of your health information.

Business Associates: Some services are provided through the use of contracted entities called "business associates". We will always release only the minimum amount of PHI necessary so that the business associate can perform the identified services. We require the business associate(s) to appropriately safeguard your information. Examples of business associates include billing companies or transcription services.

Health Information Exchange: We may make your health information available electronically to other healthcare providers outside of our facility who are involved in your care.

Treatment alternatives: We may provide you notice of treatment options or other health related services that may improve your overall health.

Appointment reminders: We may contact you as a reminder about upcoming appointments or treatment

We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, e-mail, or text messages) Also as a general practice we call our patient's home or cell telephone number and leave a message reminding them of their upcoming appointments. This is usually done two days before each dental appointment.

Post Operative Calls. As a general practice we call our patients the day of and the day after their operative appointment. We will leave a message if we do not receive an answer.

We may use or disclose your PHI in the following situations UNLESS you object.

- We may share your information with friends or family members, or other persons directly identified by you at the level they are involved in your care or payment of services. If you are not present or able to agree/object, the healthcare provider using professional judgment will determine if it is in your best interest to share the information. For example, we may discuss post procedure instructions with the person who drove you to the facility unless you tell us specifically not to share the information.
- We may use or disclose protected health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative or any other person that is responsible for your care of your location, general condition or death.
- We may use or disclose your protected health information to an authorized public or private entity to assist in disaster relief efforts.

The following additional uses and disclosures of PHI require a separate authorization with your written authorization:

- Marketing
- Disclosures for any purposes which require the sale of your information

All other uses and disclosures not recorded in this Notice will require a written authorization from you or your personal representative.

Written authorization simply explains how you want your information used and disclosed. Your written authorization may be revoked at any time, in writing. Except to the extent that your doctor or this practice has used or released information based on the direction provided in the authorization, no further use or disclosure will occur.

Your Privacy Rights

You have certain rights related to your protected health information. All requests to exercise your rights must be made in writing to the HIPAA Privacy Officer listed at the end of this Notice.

You have the right to see and obtain a copy of your protected health information.

Access: You have the right to get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than digital. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practically do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. If you request copies, we will charge you \$.50 for each page; up to \$15.00 to locate and copy your health

information, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a \$25 fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice.

You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information.

You may request for this practice not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. We are not required to agree with these requests. If we agree to a restriction request we will honor the restriction request unless the information is needed to provide emergency treatment.

There is one exception: we must accept a restriction request to restrict disclosure of information to a health plan/insurance if you pay out of pocket in full for a service or product unless it is otherwise required by law.

You have the right to request for us to communicate in different ways or in different locations.

We will agree to reasonable requests. We may also request alternative address or other method of contact such as mailing information to a post office box. We will not ask for an explanation from you about the request. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. **(You must make your request in writing.)** Your request must specify the alternative means or location, and provide satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

You may have the right to request an amendment of your health information.

You may request an amendment of your health information if you feel that the information is not correct along with an explanation of the reason for the request. In certain cases, we may deny your request for an amendment at which time you will have an opportunity to disagree.

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, since date office opened. 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

Security Breaches

We may use or disclose your PHI when determining whether a security breach has occurred for purposes of the HIPAA Breach Notification Rules as set forth in 45 C.F.R. § 164, subpart D. We may also use or disclose your PHI in responding to a breach, as required under the HIPAA Breach Notification Rules. For example, if an individual hacks into our computer network, we would investigate the incident to determine the extent of the breach and if PHI had been accessed, used or disclosed in violation of the HIPAA Privacy Rule. If a breach for purposes of HIPAA has occurred, we would notify you of the breach. We may also be required to notify the media and North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services and/or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services of the breach but your PHI will not be disclosed when such entities are notified of the breach.

Additional Privacy Rights

- You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, upon request. We will provide you a copy of this Notice the first day we treat you at our facility. In an emergency situation we will give you this notice as soon as possible.

QUESTIONS AND 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 access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or 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 this Notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with 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 with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

hipaa@triangleimplantcenter.com

Privacy Officer, 919-806-2912

This notice was originally published in 2007

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