
Watson Dental, P.C.
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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 protected health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your protected health information, and to notify affected individuals following a breach of unsecured protected health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. This Notice takes effect May 14, 2019 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 may use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. For each of these categories, we have provided a description and an example. Some information, such as HIV-related information, genetic information, alcohol and/or substance abuse records, and mental health records may be entitled to special confidentiality protections under applicable state or federal law. We will abide by these special protections as they pertain to applicable cases involving these types of records.

Treatment: We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other health care provider providing treatment to you.

Payment: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. Payment activities include billing, collections, claims management, and determinations of eligibility and coverage to obtain payment from you, an insurance company, or another third party.

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. We will continue to use your protected health information in these ways: Calling you by your first and last name from our reception area, calling you by phone to confirm your dental appointments including a reminder for taking any medications prior to your appointments and also for post operative calls, mailing you information pertaining to your upcoming appointment including the reason for your visit and a reminder for medication if necessary.

Your Authorization: In addition to our use of your health information for 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 written authorization, you may revoke it at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures 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 judgment 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.

Disaster Relief: We may use or disclose your health information to assist in disaster relief efforts.

Required by Law: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required by international, federal, state, or local law to do so.

Public Health Activities: We may disclose your health information for public health activities, including disclosures to: prevent or control disease, injury or disability, report child abuse or neglect, report reactions to medications or problems with products or devices, notify a person of a recall, repair, or replacement of products or devices, notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or condition.

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.

National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to authorized federal official's health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and other national

security activities. We may disclose to a correctional institution or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

Secretary of HHS: We will disclose your health information to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services when required to investigate or determine compliance with HIPAA.

Worker's Compensation: We may disclose your PHI to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker's compensation or other similar programs established by law.

Law Enforcement: We may disclose your PHI for law enforcement purposes as permitted by HIPAA, as required by law, or in response to a subpoena or court order.

Health Oversight Activities: We may disclose your PHI to an oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include audits, investigations, inspections, and credentialing, as necessary for licensure and for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Judicial and Administrative Proceedings: If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose your PHI in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose health information about you in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process instituted by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made, either by the requesting party or us, to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

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

Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors: We may release your PHI to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may also disclose PHI to funeral directors consistent with applicable laws to enable them to carry out their duties.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, text messages or letters).

PATIENT RIGHTS

Access: You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. 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 at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. We must be given 48 hours' notice for any copies requested. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. 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 fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

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 6 years, but not before May 14, 2013. 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.

Restriction: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use of your personal health information by submitting a written request to the office manager. The form to complete would be the Authorization to Discuss Dental Information. Your written request must include (1) what information you want to limit, (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both, and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply. **We are not required to agree to your request except in the case where the disclosure is to a health plan for purposes of carrying out payment** or health care operations, and the information pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you, or a person on your behalf (other than the health plan), has paid our practice in full. 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 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. However, if we are unable to contact you using the ways or locations you have requested, we may contact you using the information we have.

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing and it must explain why the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

Right to Notification of a Breach: You will receive notifications of breaches of your unsecured protected health information as required by law.

Electronic Notice: If you receive this Notice on our Web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

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 if 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 file a complaint with the office manager. If we cannot resolve your concern, you also may submit a written complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. The quality of your care will not be jeopardized nor will you be penalized for filing a complaint.