

Notice of Privacy Practices

Purpose: This form, Notice of Privacy Practices, presents the information that federal law requires us to give our patients regarding our privacy practices. {Note: this form may need to be changed to reflect the dental practice's particular privacy policies and/or stricter state laws.}

We must provide this Notice to each patient beginning no later than the date of our first service delivery to the patient, including service delivered electronically, after April 14, 2003. We must make a good-faith attempt to obtain written acknowledgement of receipt of the Notice from the patient. We must also have the Notice available at the office for patients to request to take with them. We must post the Notice in our office in a clear and prominent location where it is reasonable to expect any patients seeking service from us to be able to read the Notice. Whenever the Notice is revised, we must make the Notice available upon request on or after the effective date of the revision in a manner consistent with the above instructions. Thereafter, we must distribute the Notice to each new patient at the time of service delivery and to any person requesting a Notice. We must also post the revised Notice in our office as discussed above.

Edgewater Endodontics

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 health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. This Notice takes effect (9/23/2013), 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.

In addition to our use of your health information for the following purposes, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing 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.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. For example:

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

Payment: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. If you personally pay in full for service(s), you have the right to restrict us from disclosing your health information with respect to that service(s) to your health plan/insurer. For example, we may give your health insurance provider information about you so that they will pay for your treatment.

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.

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 an authorization, you may revoke it in writing 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.

Business Associates: We may disclose health information to our business associates, such as billing services or healthcare professionals providing services as independent contractor for the purpose of performing specified functions on our behalf and/or providing us with services. Health information will only be used or disclosed if the information is necessary for such functions or services. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of HEALTH INFORMATION and are not allowed to use or disclose any health information other than as specified in our contract with them.

Marketing Health-Related Services: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

Fundraising: We will not use your health information for fundraising activities, without your written authorization.

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

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.

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

Public Health and Public Benefit: We may use or disclose your health information to report abuse, neglect, or domestic violence; to report disease, injury, and vital statistics; to report certain information to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA); to alert someone who may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease; for health oversight activities; for certain judicial and administrative proceedings; for certain law enforcement purposes; to avert a serious threat to health or safety; and to comply with workers' compensation or similar programs.

Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors: We may release health information to coroners or medical examiners as necessary, for such purposes as identifying a deceased person or determining the cause of death. We also may release health information to funeral directors as necessary for their duties.

Decedents: We may disclose health information about a decedent as authorized or required by law.

National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to authorized federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institution or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards, 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 practicably 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 \$1.00 for each page, \$15.00 per hour for staff time 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 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 April 14, 2003. 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 or disclosure of your health information. 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.

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 not be able to comply with your request under certain circumstances.

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.

Breach Notification Requirements: You have the right in the event unsecured protected information about you is "breached" by provider or other covered entity and the use of the information poses a significant risk of financial, reputable or other harm to you, we will notify you of the situation and any steps you should take to protect yourself against harm due to the breach. We will inform HHS and take and other steps required by law.

Practice Transition Rule— If we sell our practice, our patient records (including but not limited to your health information) may be disclosed and physical custody may be transferred to the purchasing doctor, but only in accordance with the law. The doctor who is the new records owner will be solely responsible for ensuring privacy of your health information after the transfer and you agree that we will have no responsibility for (or duty associated with) transferred records. If all the owners of our practice die, our patient records (including but not limited to your health information) must be transferred to another doctor within 90 days to comply with Florida Board of Dentistry Rules 64B5-17.001(1) and (2), Fla. Admin. Code.²² Before we transfer records in either of these two situations, our privacy officer will obtain a Business Associate agreement from the purchaser and review your health information for super-confidential information (e.g., HIV/AIDS records), which will not be transferred without your express written authorization(indicated by your initials on our Consent form).

NOTICE OF MATERIAL CHANGES TO OUR PRIVACY PRACTICES POLICY

EFFECTIVE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

BACKGROUND:

The Health Insurance and Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) gives individuals the right to be informed of their healthcare providers' privacy practices and the right to understand and control how their health information is used. Healthcare providers are required to develop and distribute a notice that provides a clear explanation of these rights and practices. Our Practice has made material changes to our privacy practices, consistent with legal changes to HIPAA and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH).

SUMMARY OF MATERIAL CHANGES TO OUR PRIVACY PRACTICES:

We have added a statement to our Privacy Practices acknowledging that we may not use or disclose your protected health information for marketing or fundraising purposes, including disclosures that constitute sales, without your authorization. Patients have the right to restrict the Practice from disclosing certain protected health information to health plan providers if the patient personally pays for their service in full. We have revised our internal privacy breach reporting practices to comply with 2013 changes in the HIPAA and HITECH privacy rules, and patients have a right to receive a notification of breaches of unsecured protected health information.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us as indicated below.

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 Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights 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 Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights.

Contact Officer: Robert Heydrich, D.M.D.
Telephone: 352-688-7858
E-mail: info@edgewaterendodontics.com
Address: 5305 Spring Hill Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34606

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