

NORTHSIDE ENT, INC.
NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES FOR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

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 our Privacy Contact, Paul Rosiek.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclosed your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information, that may identify you and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services.

We are required to abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices. We may change the terms of our notice at any time. The new notice will be effective for all protected health information that we maintain both before and after the change. Upon your request, we will provide you with any revised Notice of Privacy Practices by calling the office and requesting that a revised copy be sent to you in the mail or asking for one at the time of your next appointment.

1. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

You will be asked by your physician to sign this Notice of Privacy Practices. We will make a good faith effort to obtain a written acknowledgment that you received this Notice of Privacy Practices for Protected Health Information, the first time we provide services to you after April 14, 2003 or as soon as reasonably practicable under the circumstances. Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you. Your protected health information may also be used and disclosed to obtain payment for your health care bills and to support the operation of the physician's practice.

Following are examples of the types of uses and disclosures of your protected health care information that the physician's office is permitted to make. These examples are not meant to be exhaustive, but to describe the types of uses and disclosures that may be made by our office.

Treatment. We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party that may need access to your protected health information. For example, we would disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to a home health agency that provides care to you. We will also disclose protected health information to other physicians who may be treating you. For example, your protected health information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician has the necessary information to diagnose or treat you.

In addition, we may disclose your protected health information 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.

Payment. Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your health care services. This may include certain activities that your health insurance plan may undertake before it approves or pays for the health care services we recommend for you such as: making a determination of eligibility or coverage for insurance benefits, reviewing services provided to you for medical necessity and undertaking utilization review activities. For example, obtaining approval for a hospital stay may require that your relevant protected health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the hospital admission.

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Healthcare Operations. We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of your physician's practice. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conducting or arranging for other business activities.

For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your physician is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment.

We will share your protected health information with third party "business associates" that perform various activities (e.g., billing, transcription services) for the practice. Whenever an arrangement between our office and a business associate involves the use or disclosure of your protected health information, we will have a written contract that contains terms that will protect the privacy of your protected health information.

We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to provide you with information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. We may also use and disclose your protected health information for other marketing activities. For example, your name and address may be used to send you a newsletter about our practice and the services we offer. We may also send you information about products or services that we believe may be beneficial to you. You may contact our Privacy Contact to request that these materials not be sent to you.

We may use or disclose your demographic information and the dates that you received treatment from your physician, as necessary, in order to contact you for fundraising activities supported by our office. If you do not want to receive these materials, please contact our Privacy Contact and request that these fundraising materials not be sent to you.

Uses and disclosures of Protected Health Information Based Upon Your Written Authorization

Other uses and disclosures of your protected health information will be made only with your written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law as described below. You may revoke this authorization, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your physician or the physician's practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures that may be made without Your Authorization or Opportunity to Object.

We may use and disclose your protected health information in the following instances. You have the opportunity to agree or object to the use or disclosure of all or part of your protected health information. If you are not present or able to agree or object to the use or disclosure of the protected health information, then your physician may, using professional judgment, determine whether the disclosure is in your best interest. In this case, only the protected health information that is relevant to your health care will be disclosed.

Facility Directories. Unless you object, we will use and disclose in our facility directory your name, the location at which you are receiving care, your condition (in general terms), and your religious affiliation. All of this information, except religious affiliation, will be disclosed to people that ask for you by name. Members of the clergy will be told your religious affiliation.