

Notice of privacy practices

Terence A. Degan, MD

As required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), this notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed, as well as how you can get access to your health information. This law specifies that your individually identifiable health information is "protected health information," abbreviated as "PHI."

When can your PHI be disclosed ?

Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to treat you. For example, we might disclose your PHI to a pharmacy when we order a prescription for you. What we would disclose to them, however, would be limited to just the information that they needed to provide the medication to you or to obtain your insurance company's authorization. Also, family members involved in your care may need to know some of your PHI.

Our practice may disclose your PHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services you receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer to certify that you are eligible for benefits. We may provide your insurer with details regarding your treatment to determine if your insurer will pay for your treatment. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers to assist in their billing efforts.

Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to operate our business. For example, our practice may use your PHI to evaluate the quality of care you received from us or to conduct business planning activities for our practice.

Our practice may disclose your PHI to public health authorities, health oversight agencies and law enforcement agencies when authorized or directed by law or court order.

What are your rights regarding your PHI ?

You can specify how we communicate your PHI to you. For example, you may prefer that we mail appointment reminders to your work. In another example, you may want laboratory results given to you in person, by email or left on your home answering machine, etc. We will provide you a form for this.

You can request that your PHI not be disclosed to a particular person or agency. In order to request such a restriction, you must make your request in writing to Dr. Degan. Occasionally, we will not be able to comply with this type

of request due to regulatory, insurance or other requirements.

You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of your PHI including medical and billing records. In order to inspect or obtain a copy of your PHI, you must submit your request in writing to Dr. Degan. Our practice may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing, labor and supplies associated with your request. In certain limited circumstances, our practice may deny your request to inspect or copy your PHI. However, you may request a review of our denial. A licensed health care professional chosen by us would then conduct such a review.

For as long as your PHI is kept by our practice, you may ask us to amend your health information. Your request -along with your reason- must be made in writing and submitted to Dr. Degan. We may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that is in our opinion: accurate and complete; or not part of your PHI that we keep; or not part of the PHI which you would be permitted to inspect and copy (eg., psychotherapy notes); or not created by our practice, unless the individual or entity that created the information is not available to amend the information.

You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures," which is a list of certain non-routine disclosures our practice has made of your PHI for purposes not related to treatment, payment or operations. All requests for an "accounting of disclosures" must state a time period, which may not be longer than six years from the date of disclosure and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. The first list you request within a 12-month period is free of charge, but our practice may charge you for additional lists within the same 12-month period.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our practice or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be submitted in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

Please direct all questions, comments, complaints or requests to:

Terence A. Degan, MD
1216 Suncast Lane, Suite 1
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762