

Cobb Family Dentistry

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 law to maintain the privacy of protected health information, to provide individuals with notice of our legal our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to 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 September 13, 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, and to make new Notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. When we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this Notice and post the new Notice clearly and prominently at our practice location, and we will provide copies of the new Notice 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 ABOUT YOU

We use and disclose your health information for different purposes, including treatment, payment, and health care 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 and disclose your health information for your treatment. Ex: we may disclose your health information to a specialist providing treatment to you.

Payment: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain reimbursement for the treatment and services you receive from us or another entity involved with your care. Payment activities include billing, collections, claims management, and determination of eligibility and coverage to obtain payment from you, an insurance company, or

another third party. Ex: we may send claims to your dental health plan containing certain health information.

Healthcare Operations: We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Ex: healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, conducting training programs, and licensing activities

Individual Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. We must disclose your health information to your family or friends or any other individual identified by you when they are involved in your care or in the payment for your care. Additionally, we may disclose information about you to a patient representative. If a person has the authority by law to make health care decisions for you, we will treat that patient representative the same way we would treat you with respect to your health information.

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 to do so by law.

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; or*Notify the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.

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, text, postcards, or letters).

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 HIPPA.

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 HIPPA, 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 law to enable them to carry out their duties.

Fundraising. We may contact you to provide you with information about our sponsored activities, including fundraising programs as permitted by applicable law. If you do not wish to receive such information from us, you may opt out of receiving the communications.

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. We reserve the right to charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies, staff time and postage.

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.

Right to Request a Restriction: You have the right to request additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI by submitting a written request to the Privacy Official. 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.

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. If we agree to your request, we will amend your record(s) and notify you of such. If we deny your request for an amendment, we will provide you with a written explanation of why we denied it and explain your rights.

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

Electronic Notice: You may receive a paper copy of this Notice upon request, even if you have agreed to receive this Notice electronically on our Web site or by electronic e-mail. 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. Our emails are not encrypted, but never is your private personal information emailed to anyone other than those defined in this disclosure.

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 assist you in any way possible if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact Person: Office Manager
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