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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective Date: 4-14-03

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.

Each time you visit a physician, hospital, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination, and test results, diagnoses, treatment, a plan for future care or treatment, and billing-related information. Your record represents Protected Health Information.

We are committed to treating and using Protected Health Information about you responsibly. This Notice describes the personal information we collect, and how and when we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your Protected Health Information. This Notice applies to all Protected Health Information, as defined by federal regulations, that is generated by our office.

THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES DESCRIBE EXAMPLES OF THE WAY WE USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION

**For Treatment:** We may use your health information to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to other health professionals who contribute to your care (such as doctors, nurses, technicians, or other personnel who are involved in taking care of you).

**For Payment:** We may use and disclose medical information about your treatment and services to bill and collect payment from you, your insurance company, or a third party payer. For example, we may need to give your insurance company information about your treatment so they will pay us for the treatment. We may also tell your health plan about treatment you are going to receive to determine whether your plan will cover it.

**For Healthcare Operations (Business Associates):** There are some services provided in our office through contracts with business associates. Examples include transcription of your dictated health information, a copy service making copies of your health records, and off-site storage of medical records. When services such as these are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do. To protect your health information, however, we require the business associates to appropriately safeguard your information.

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

**Communication with Family or Friend:** We may release medical information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care or who helps pay for your care.

We may also use and disclose medical information to/for the following:

- \* to remind you that you have an appointment
- \* to assess your satisfaction with our services
- \* Food and Drug Administration
- \* Organ and Tissue Donation Organizations
- \* Health Oversight Agencies
- \* Funeral Directors, Coroners, Medical Directors
- \* to notify or assist in notifying a disaster relief entity so that your family can be notified about your health status
- \* Public Health Authorities
- \* Workers Compensation Agents
- \* Legal Authorities
- \* Military Command Authorities
- \* National Security & Intelligence Agencies
- \* Proactive Services for the President
- \* for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to subpoena

