



## Notice of Patient Privacy Policy

**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 Officer or any staff member in our office.

**Our Privacy Officer is Rachel Sparks, D.C.**

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information to carry out your treatment, collect payment for your care and manage the operations of this clinic. It also describes our policies concerning the use and disclosure of this information for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected Health Information" (PHI) is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you, that relates to your past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services.

We are required by federal law 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 PHI that we maintain at that time. You may obtain revisions to our Notice of Privacy Practices by accessing our website <https://www.ictmjc.com>, 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.

### **A. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information**

By applying to be treated in our office, you are implying consent to the use and disclosure of your PHI by your doctor, 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 PHI may also be used and disclosed to bill for your health care and to support the operation of the practice.

#### **Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Based Upon Your Implied Consent**

Following are examples of the types of uses and disclosures of your protected health care information we will make, based on this implied consent. 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 PHI 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 has already obtained your permission to have access to your PHI. For example, we would disclose your PHI, as necessary, to another physician who may be treating you. Your PHI 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 PHI from time-to-time to another physician or health care provider (e.g., a specialist or laboratory) who, at the request of your doctor, becomes involved in your care by providing assistance with your health care diagnosis or treatment.

- **Payment:** Your PHI 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 chiropractic spinal adjustments may require that your relevant PHI be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for those services.
- **Healthcare Operations:** We may use or disclose, as needed, your PHI in order to support the business activities of this office. These activities may include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities and training of chiropractic students.

For example, we may disclose your PHI to chiropractic interns or preceptors 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 doctor. Communications between you and the doctor or his assistants may be recorded to assist us in accurately capturing your responses; we may also call you by name in the reception area when your doctor is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your PHI, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment. We do have open therapy/adjusting areas.

We will share your PHI 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 PHI, we will have a written contract with that business associate that contains terms that will protect the privacy of your PHI.

We may use or disclose your PHI, 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 PHI for other internal marketing activities. For example, your name, email and address may be used to send you a newsletter

about our practice and the services we offer, we will ask for your authorization. We may also send you information about products or services that we believe may be beneficial to you. You may contact our Privacy Officer to request that these materials not be sent to you.

#### **Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information That May Be Made Only With Your Written Authorization**

Other uses and disclosures of your PHI will be made only with your written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law as described below.

- *Disclosures of psychotherapy notes*
- *Uses and disclosures of Protected Health Information for marketing purposes;*
- *Disclosures that constitute a sale of Protected Health Information;*
- *Other uses and disclosures not described in the Notice of Privacy Practices will be made only with authorization from the individual.*

You may revoke any of these authorizations, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your doctor or the practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

#### **Other Permitted & Required Uses & Disclosures That May Be Made With Your Authorization or Opportunity to Object**

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

- **Others Involved in Your Healthcare:** Unless you object, we may disclose to a family member, a relative, a close friend or any other person you identify, your PHI that directly relates to that person's involvement in your health care. If you are unable to agree or object to such a disclosure, we may disclose such information as necessary if we determine that it is in your best interest based on our professional judgment. We may use or disclose PHI to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative or any other person responsible for your care, your location or general condition. Finally, we may use or disclose your PHI to authorized public or private entity to assist in disaster relief efforts & to coordinate uses & disclosures to family or other persons involved in your health care.

#### **Other Permitted & Required Uses and, Disclosures That May Be Made Without Your Consent, Authorization or Opportunity to Object**

We may use or disclose your PHI in the following situations without your consent or authorization. The situations include:

- **Required By Law:** We may use or disclose your PHI to the extent that the law requires the use or disclosure. The use or disclosure will be made in compliance with the law and will be limited to the relevant requirements of the law. You will be notified, as required by law, of any such uses or disclosures.
- **Public Health:** We may disclose your PHI for public health activities and purposes to a public health authority that is permitted by law to collect or receive the information. The disclosure will be made for the purpose of controlling disease, injury or disability. We may also disclose your PHI, if directed by the public health authority, to a foreign government agency that is collaborating with the public health authority.
- **Communicable Diseases:** We may disclose your PHI, if authorized by law, to a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or may otherwise be at risk of contracting or spreading the disease or condition.
- **Health Oversight:** We may disclose PHI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, such as audits, investigations, and inspections. Oversight agencies seeking this information include: government agencies that oversee health care system, government benefit programs, other government regulatory programs & civil rights laws.
- **Abuse or Neglect:** We may disclose your PHI to a public health authority that is authorized by law to receive reports of child abuse or neglect. In addition, we may disclose your PHI if we believe that you have been a victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence to the governmental entity or agency authorized to receive such information. In this case, the disclosure will be made consistent with the requirements of applicable federal and state laws.
- **Legal Proceedings:** We may disclose PHI in the course of any judicial or administrative proceeding, in response to an order of a court or administrative tribunal (to the extent such disclosure is expressly authorized), in certain conditions in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process.
- **Law Enforcement:** We may also disclose PHI, so long as applicable legal requirements are met, for law enforcement purposes. These law enforcement purposes include (1) legal process and otherwise required by law, (2) limited information requests for identification and location purposes, (3) pertaining to victims of a crime, (4) suspicion that death has occurred as a result of criminal conduct, (5) in the event that a crime occurs on the premises of the Practice, and (6) medical emergency (not on the Practice's premises) and it is likely that a crime has occurred.
- **Workers' Compensation:** We may disclose your PHI, as authorized, to comply with workers' compensation laws and other similar legally-established programs.
- **Required Uses and Disclosures:** Under the law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of Section 164.500 et. seq.

## **B. Your Rights**

Following is a statement of your rights with respect to your PHI & a brief description of how you may exercise these rights.

- **You have the right to inspect and copy your protected health information.** This means you may inspect and obtain a copy of PHI about you that is contained in a designated record set for as long as we maintain the PHI. A "designated record set" contains medical and billing records and any other records that your doctor and the Practice uses for making decisions about you.

Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records; psychotherapy notes; information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding, and PHI that is subject to law that prohibits access to protect PHI. Depending on the circumstances, a decision to deny access may be reviewed. In some circumstances, you may have a right to have this decision reviewed. Please contact our Privacy Officer, if you have questions about access to your medical record.

- **You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information.** This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your PHI for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. *You have the right to restrict certain disclosures of Protected Health Information to a health plan when you pay out of pocket in full for the healthcare delivered by our office.* You may also request that any part of your PHI not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must be in writing and state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply. *You may opt out of fundraising communications in which our office participates.*

Your provider is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If the doctor believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of your PHI, your PHI will not be restricted. If your doctor does agree to the requested restriction, we may not use or disclose your PHI in violation of that restriction unless it is needed to provide emergency treatment. With this in mind, please discuss any restriction you wish to request with your doctor.

You may request a restriction by presenting your request, in writing to the staff member identified as "Privacy Officer" at the top of this form. The Privacy Officer will provide you with "Restriction of Consent" form. Complete the form, sign it, and ask that the staff provide you with a photocopy of your request initialed by them. This will serve as your receipt.

- **You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location.** We will accommodate reasonable requests. We may also condition this accommodation by asking you for information as to how payment will be handled or specification of an alternative address or other method of contact. We will not request an explanation from you as to the basis for the request. Please make this request in writing.
- **You may have the right to have your doctor amend your protected health information.** This means you may request an amendment of PHI about you in a designated record set for as long as we maintain this information. In certain cases, we may deny your request for an amendment. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal. Please contact our Privacy Officer if you have questions about amending your medical record.
- **You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information.** This right applies to disclosures for purposes other than treatment, payment or healthcare operations as described in this Notice of Privacy practices. It excludes disclosures we may have made to you, to family members or friends involved in your care, pursuant to a duly executed authorization or for notification purposes. You have the right to receive specific information regarding these disclosures that occurred after April 14, 2003. The right to receive this information is subject to certain exceptions, restrictions and limits.
- **You have the right to be notified by our office of any breach of privacy of your Protected Health Information.**
- **Certain treatments may be performed in a common therapy area and you may find yourself within public areas within the clinic times.** Please note private rooms are always available, upon request, for discussing your private health information.
- You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, upon request, even if you have agreed to accept this notice electronically.

### C. Complaints

You may complain to us, or Secretary of Health & Human Services, if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. *To file a complaint you may go to:*

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/hipcomplaintform.pdf>

*Or our office can provide you with a written form in which to file your complaint.* You may also file a complaint with us by notifying our Privacy Officer of your complaint. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Our Privacy Officer is Rachel Sparks DC you may contact our Privacy Officer, or any staff member, at the following phone number 316-854-3010 or our website <https://ictmjc.com> for further information about the complaint process.