

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES



Trillium Natural Medicine

naturopathic medicine & acupuncture

### PURPOSE

This form, Notice of Privacy Practices, presents the information that federal law requires us to give our patients regarding our privacy practices.

This Notice explains how our office may use and disclose your protected health information and your rights regarding how we protect your health information. "Protected health information," including demographics, can be reasonably used to identify you, relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health condition, the provision of care to you, or the payment for that care. We reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice and our privacy policy at any time. Any changes will apply to all protected health information that we maintain effective the date of a new Notice. New Notices will be posted at Trillium Natural Medicine and you may obtain one at any time.

This Notice goes into effect October 25th, 2007.

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 applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. This Notice takes effect Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006 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. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices we will change this Notice and make the new Notice available 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

We may use and disclose your health information for different reasons.

- **Treatment:** We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other health care provider to assist in your diagnosis and treatment.
- **Payment:** We may use or disclose your health information in order to bill and collect payment for services provided. For example, to claims processing companies and others that participate in the claims payment process.
- **Health Care Operations:** We may use or disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include activities necessary such as quality management, utilization review, anti-fraud and claims payment, provider credentialing activities, and as required by industry or government regulators such as state licensing boards, insurance regulatory agencies and the sponsor of your health plan.
- **Your Authorization:** In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not

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affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this Notice.

- **To Your Family and Friends:** We must disclose your health information to you as described in the Patient Rights section of this Notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your healthcare or with payment for your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so.
- **Persons Involved In Care:** We may use or disclose health information to notify or assist in notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on determination using our personal judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays or other similar forms of health information.
- **Marketing Health-Related Services:** We will not use your health information for marketing communication without your written authorization.
- **Appointment Reminders:** We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards, or letters).

Our office may not use or disclose any more of your protected health information than is necessary to accomplish the purpose of the use or disclosure, except for treatment purposes.

### **We must disclose, when required by law, for the following examples:**

- **Avoid threat to health or safety.** To law enforcement personnel or persons able to prevent or lessen a serious threat to public safety.
- **Coroners, funeral directors, organ donation.** To said professionals such that they can carry out their duties.
- **Health oversight activities.** To assist the government agencies, such as when it conducts an investigation or inspection of a health care organization.
- **Health-related benefits or services.** For appointment reminders or give you information about treatment alternatives or services that may be of interest to you.
- **Law enforcement, judicial and administrative proceedings.** In response to a subpoena, discovery request, in response to a warrant, to identify or locate a suspect, to provide information about a victim of a crime or other lawful process.
- **National security and intelligence.** As required by military officials for security and military purposes.
- **Public health activities.** To public health agencies for reasons such as preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability.
- **Research.** For medical research - Such circumstances include taking steps to protect your privacy.
- **Victims of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.** To government agencies and law enforcement personnel as required by law.
- **Workers' compensation.** In compliance with workers' compensation laws.

### **Authorization**

Any uses or disclosures other than those described above will be made only with your prior written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law. In the event that you authorize us to use your protected health information for other uses, you have the right to revoke any authorization by delivering a written revocation statement, except to the extent that we have already disclosed the information or are allowed by law to use the information to contest a claim or coverage.

### **PATIENT RIGHTS**

- **Access Right:** You have the right to view or obtain 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 practically do so.

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- You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. If you request copies, we will charge you for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee. Contact us using the information at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.
- **Right to request restrictions on uses and disclosures:** You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions but if we do we will abide by our agreement. To request a restriction, please provide written request. Upon receiving your request we will put the limits and terms in writing and abide by them except in emergency situations. You may not limit the uses and disclosures that we are legally required to make.
- **Right to receive an accounting of disclosures:** 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 Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006. 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 receive confidential communications:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. Your request must be made in writing. This includes the right to direct where communications are sent. For example, you may request that information be sent to your work address rather than your home address or via email than by regular mail. To verify or modify where or how you would like communication sent, contact the address listed at the end of the Notice. Unless requested otherwise we will direct mailings and telephone messages to the address/telephone number we have on record. Your written request must provide a satisfactory explanation of how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.
- **Right to inspect and copy:** You have the right to see and obtain copies of your information that we maintain. Submit your request in writing to address below and we will respond to you within 30 days of receipt of your written request. We will charge you a reasonable copying fee for each page and mailing costs but will inform you of that fee in advance.
- **Right to amend:** You have the right to request that we amend your health information. If you believe there is a mistake or missing information, you have the right to request that we correct or add to your file. You must provide the request in writing to the address at the end of this Notice and it must explain why the information should be amended.  
We will respond within 60 days of receipt of your written request. We may deny your request in writing under certain circumstances. Our written denial will state the reason for the denial and explain your right to file a written statement of disagreement with the denial. You also have the right to request that copies of your initial request and our denial be attached to all future disclosures of your information.
- **Right to get a paper copy of this Notice:** If you receive this Notice on our Web site or by electronic mail (email), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

### **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 not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Telephone:** 412-571-9355

**Address:** Trillium Natural Medicine, 3043 West Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216