



Norman J. Torres MD • 1011 Medical Plaza Drive, Suite 130 The Woodlands, TX 77380 • Phone: 832-585-9191 • Fax: 832-369-4935

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice advises you on how medical information about you may be used, disclosed and gain access to the information. Please review it carefully. Your personal information is important and confidential. Our ethics and policies require that your information be held in strict confidence.

INTRODUCTION

The office of Dr. Norman J. Torres is committed to treat and use protected health information about you responsibly. This notice of Privacy Policies describes the personal information we collect, how and when we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your protected health information. This notice is effective April 14, 2003 and applies to all protected health information as defined by federal regulations.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEALTH RECORD

Each time you come and see Dr. Norman J. Torres, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnosis, treatment and a plan for care. This information often referred to as your Health or Medical Record. It serves as a:

- Basis for planning your care or treatment
- Means of communication among doctors and other healthcare professionals who contribute to your care.
- Legal document describing the care you received.
- Means by which you or a third party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided.
- Tool in educating health professionals.
- Source of data for medical research.
- Source of information for public health officials charged to improve the health of the state and nation.
- Source of data for planning and marketing.
- Tool by which we can assess and continually work to improve the care we render and outcomes we achieve.

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to ensure its accuracy, better understand who, what, when, where, and why others may access your health information and make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosures to others.

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION RIGHTS

Although your health record is the physical property of Norman J. Torres, MD, PA, the information belongs to you. You have the right to:

- Obtain a paper copy of this notice of Privacy Policies upon request
- Inspect and Obtain a copy of your health record as provided by 45 CFR 164.524 (reasonable copy fees may apply in accordance with state law).
- Amend your health record as provided by 45 CFR 164.526
- Obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information as provided by 45 CFR 164.528
- Request confidential communications of your health information as provided by CFR 164.522(B).
- Request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information as provided by 45 FR 164.522(b). However, we are not required by law to agree to a requested restriction.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Norman J. Torres, MD, PA is required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information
- Provide you with this notice as our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you
- Abide by the terms of this notice
- Notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction
- Accommodate reasonable request you may have to communicate your health information.

We reserve the right to change our practices to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. We will keep a posted copy of the most current notice in our facility containing the effective date, April 14, 2003. In addition, each time you visit our facility for treatment, you may obtain a copy of the current notice in effect, upon request.



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We will not use or disclose your health information in a manner other than described in the section regarding Examples of Disclosure For Treatment, Payment and Health Operations, without your written authorization, which you may revoke as provided by 45 CFR 164.508(b)(5) except to the extent that action has already been taken.

For More Information Or To Report A Problem

If you have questions and would like additional information, you may contact our practice at 832-585-9191.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can either file a complaint with Medical Director or with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (OCR). There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint with either our practice or the OCR. The address for the OCR regional office for Texas is as follows:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
1301 Young Street, Suite 1169
Dallas, TX 75202

Examples of Disclosure for Treatment, Payment and Health Operations

We will use your health information for treatment.

We may provide medical information about you to health care providers, our practice personnel, or third parties who are involved in the provision, management, or coordination of your health care.

We will use your health information for payment.

We may disclose your information so that we can collect or make payment for the health care services you receive.

We will use your health information for regular health operations.

We may disclose your health information for our routine operations. These uses are necessary for certain administrative, financial, legal and quality improvement activities that are necessary to run our practice and support the core functions:

- Appointment Reminders
- Decedents
- Workers Compensation
- Public Health
- Research
- Organ Procurement Organizations
- As Required By Law
- Specialized Government Functions
- Business Associates
- Practice Marketing
- Food And Drug Administration (FDA)
- Personal Representative
- To Avert A Serious Threat To Health Safety
- Communication With Family
- Disaster Relief

For all non-routine operations, we will obtain your written authorization before disclosing your personal information. In addition, we take great care to safeguard your information in every way that we can to minimize any incidental disclosures.