

# Gulf Coast Gastroenterology

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**Privacy Officer:** Kate Falls, Office Manager

**Effective Date:** 9 January, 2006

## Notice of Privacy Practices

**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.**

We care about our patients' privacy and strive to protect the confidentiality of your medical information at this practice. New federal legislation requires that we issue this official notice of our privacy practices. You have the right to the confidentiality of your medical information, and this practice is required by law to maintain the privacy of that protected health information. This practice is required to abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect, and to provide notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. If you have any questions about this Notice, please contact the Privacy Officer at this practice.

### Who Will Follow This Notice

Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your medical record, all employees, staff and other personnel at this practice who may need access to your information must abide by this Notice. All subsidiaries, business associates (e.g. a billing service), sites and locations of this practice may share medical information each other for treatment, payment purposes health care operations described in this Notice. Except where treatment is involved, only the minimum necessary information needed to accomplish the task will be shared.

### How We May Use and Disclose Medical Information About You

The following categories describe different ways that we may use and disclose medical information without your specific consent or authorization. Examples are provided for each category of uses or disclosures. Not every possible use or disclosure in a category is listed.

**For Treatment.** We may use medical information about you to- provide you with medical treatment or services.

Example: In treating you for a specific condition, we may need to know if you have allergies that could influence which medications we prescribe for the treatment process.

**For Payment.** We may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive from us may be billed and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. Example: We may need to send your protected health information, such as your name, address, office visit date, and codes identifying your diagnosis and treatment to your insurance company for payment

**For Health Care Operations.** We may use and disclose medical information about you for health care operations to assure that you receive quality care. Example: We may use medical information to review our treatment and services and evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you.

### Other Uses or Disclosures That Can Be Made Without Consent or Authorization

- As required during an investigation by law enforcement agencies
- To avert a serious threat to public health or safety
- As required by military command authorities for their medical records
- To workers' compensation or similar programs for processing of claims
- In response to a legal proceeding
- To a coroner or medical examiner for identification of a body
- If an inmate, to the correctional institution or law enforcement official
- As required by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Other healthcare providers' treatment activities
- Other covered entities' and providers' payment activities
- Other covered entities' healthcare operations activities (to the extent permitted under HIPAA)
- Uses and disclosures required by law
- Uses and disclosures in domestic violence or neglect situations
- Health oversight activities
- Other public health activities

We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.