

Torrey Hills Chiropractic * Dr. Stephen Ronco

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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective Date: April 14, 2003

Please Note: In order to comply with the numerous state, Federal, and local laws that govern medical information privacy, this document is provided. The Torrey Hills Chiropractic, its healthcare practitioners, and all associated personnel will do everything possible to maintain the privacy of your medical information as required by law. Under no circumstances will the Torrey Hills Chiropractic disclose your personal or medical information to any outside parties.

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.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE:

This notice describes Torrey Hills Chiropractic's practices and that of: Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your patient chart. All employees, staff and other clinic personnel.

OUR PLEDGE REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION:

We understand that medical information about you and your health is personal. We are committed to protecting medical information about you. We create a record of the care and services you receive at the clinic. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by the clinic, whether made by clinic personnel or your personal doctor. Your personal doctor may have different policies or notices regarding the doctor's use and disclosure of your medical information created in the doctor's office or clinic.

This notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose medical information about you. We also describe your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of medical information.

We are required by law to:

- make sure that medical information that identifies you is kept private;
- give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to medical information about you; and
- follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU.

The following categories describe different ways that we use and disclose medical information. For each category of uses or disclosures we will explain what we mean and try to give some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

For Treatment. We may use medical information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to doctors, nutritionists, technicians, or other clinic personnel who are involved in taking care of you at the clinic. Different departments of the clinic

also may share medical information about you in order to coordinate the different things you need, such as prescriptions, lab work and x-rays.

For Health Care Operations. We may use and disclose medical information about you for clinic operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the clinic and make sure that all of our patients receive quality care. For example, we may use medical information to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you. We may also combine medical information about many clinic patients to decide what additional services the clinic should offer, what services are not needed, and whether certain new treatments are effective. We may also disclose information to doctors, nutritionists, technicians, and other clinic personnel for review and learning purposes. We may also combine the medical information we have with medical information from other clinics to compare how we are doing and see where we can make improvements in the care and services we offer. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of medical information so others may use it to study health care and health care delivery without learning who the specific patients are.

Appointment Reminders. We may use and disclose medical information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment at the clinic.

Treatment Alternatives. We may use and disclose medical information to tell you about or recommend possible treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you.

Health-Related Benefits and Services. We may use and disclose medical information to tell you about health-related benefits or services that may be of interest to you.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. We may release medical information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care. We may also give information to someone who helps pay for your care. In addition, we may disclose medical information about you to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort so that your family can be notified about your condition, status and location.

Research. Under limited circumstances, we may use and disclose medical information about you for research purposes. Note: Under no circumstances will your name be associated with your medical data. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health and recovery of all patients who received one medication to those who received another, for the same condition. All research projects, however, are subject to a special approval process. This process evaluates a proposed research project and its use of medical information, trying to balance the research needs with patients' need for privacy of their medical information. Before we use or disclose medical information for research, the project will have been approved through this research approval process, but we may, however, disclose medical information about you to people preparing to conduct a research project, for example, to help them look for patients with specific medical needs, so long as the medical information they review does not leave the clinic.

As Required By Law. We will disclose medical information about you when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose medical information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits and Disputes. If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose medical information about you in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose medical information about you in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

National Security and Intelligence Activities. We may release medical information about you to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities.

Right to Inspect and Copy. You have the right to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records. To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must submit your request in writing to the address below. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request.

Right to Amend. If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the clinic. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the address below. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment; is not part of the medical information kept by or for the clinic; is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or is accurate and complete.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." This is a list of the disclosures we made of medical information about you. To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the address below. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list (for example, on paper, electronically). The first list you request within a 12-month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

Right to Request Restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the medical information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery you had. We will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment. To request restrictions, you must make your request in writing to the address below. In your request, you must tell us (1) what

information you want to limit; (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both; and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply, for example, disclosures to your spouse.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

We reserve the right to change this notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of the current notice in the clinic. The notice will contain on the first page, in the top right-hand corner, the effective date.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the clinic or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the clinic, call 800-831-8798. All complaints must be submitted in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

OTHER USES OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provide us permission to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that permission, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.

**THIS FORM IS REQUIRED BY LAW AND SERVES TO
PROTECT YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY.**

Torrey Hills Chiropractic protects the privacy of your personal and health information. Personal and health information includes both medical information and individually identifiable information, such as your name, address, or telephone number. Torrey Hills Chiropractic will not disclose this information without your authorization, except as permitted by law.

Our **Notice of Privacy Practices** provides information about how your protected health information may be used or disclosed. You have the right to request that we restrict how protected health information about you is used or disclosed. Please review the Notice of Privacy Practices before signing this consent.

By signing this form, you consent to our use and disclosure of your protected health information as indicated in the Notice of Privacy Practices. Please note that your personal information is **not** shared with third parties such as financial, credit, or marketing companies. Use is restricted to procedures that are relevant to your care.

You have the right to revoke this consent, in writing, except where we have already made disclosures in reliance on your prior consent.

Print name

Signature

Date