

Revised August 2014

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.

This notice takes effect on January 1, 2003 and remains in effect until we replace it.

1. OUR PLEDGE REGARDING DENTAL INFORMATION

This privacy of your dental information is important to us. We understand that your medical information is personal and we are committed to protecting it. We create a record of the care and services you receive at our dental office. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice will tell you about the ways we may use and share dental information about you. We also describe your rights and certain duties we have regarding the use and disclosure of dental information. Throughout this notice we refer to your medical information as dental information.

2. OUR LEGAL DUTY

Law Requires Us to:

1. Keep your dental information private.
2. Give you this notice describing our legal duties, privacy practices and your right regarding your dental information, and to notify affected individuals following a breach of unsecured protected health information.
3. Follow the terms of the current notice.

We Have the Right to:

1. Change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided that the changes are permitted by law.
2. Make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all dental information that we keep, including information previously created or received before the changes.

Notice of Change to Privacy Practices:

1. Before we make an important change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make the new notice available upon request.

3. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF YOUR DENTAL INFORMATION

The following section describes different ways that we use and disclose dental information. For each kind of use or disclosure, we will explain what we mean and give an example. Not every use or disclosure will be listed. However, we have listed all of the different ways we are permitted to use and disclose dental information. Some information, alcohol and /or substance abuse records, and mental health records may be entitled to special confidentiality protections under applicable state or federal law. We will abide by these special protections as they pertain to applicable cases involving these types of records. We will not use or disclose your dental information for any purpose not listed below, without your specific written authorization. Any specific written authorization you provide may be revoked at any time by writing to us at the address provided at the end of this notice.

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FOR TREATMENT: We may use dental information about you to provide you with dental treatment or services and may disclose dental information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, or other people who are taking care of you. We may also share dental information about you to your other health care providers to assist them in treating you.

FOR PAYMENT: We may use and disclose your dental information for payment purposes. A bill may be sent to you or a third-party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include your dental information.

FOR HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS: We may use and disclose your dental information for our health care operations. This might include measuring and improving quality, evaluating the performance of employees, conducting training programs, and getting the accreditation, certificates, licenses and credentials we need to serve you.

ADDITIONAL USES AND DISCLOSURES: In addition to using and disclosing your dental information for treatment, payment and health care operations, we may use and disclose dental information for the following purposes:

Notification: We may use and disclose dental information to notify or help notify: a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care. If you are present, we will get your permission if possible before we share, or give you the opportunity to refuse permission. In case of emergency, and if you are not able to give or refuse permission, we will share only the health information that is directly necessary for your health care, according to our professional judgment. We will also use our dental supplies, x-ray or other dental information for you.

Disaster Relief: We may use or disclose your health information to assist in disaster relief efforts.

Required by Law: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law.

Research in Limited Circumstances: We may use medical information for research purposes in limited circumstances where the research has been approved by a review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of dental information.

Funeral director, Coroner, Medical Examiner: To help them carry out their duties, we may share the dental information of a person who has died with a coroner, medical examiner, funeral director, or an organ procurement organization.

Specialized Government Functions: Subject to certain requirements, we may disclose or use dental information for military personnel and veterans, for national security and intelligence, activities, for protective correctional institutions and other law enforcement custodial situations, and for government programs providing public benefits.

Court Orders and Judicial and Administrative Proceedings: We may disclose dental information in response to a court or administrative order, subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process, under certain circumstances. Under limited circumstances, such as a court order, warrant, or grand jury subpoena, we may share your dental information with law enforcement officials. We may share limited information with a law enforcement official concerning the dental information of a suspect, fugitive, material witness, crime victim or missing person. We may share the dental information of an inmate or other person in lawful custody with a law enforcement official or correctional institution under certain circumstances.

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Public Health Activities: As required by law, we may disclose your dental information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability, including child abuse or neglect. We may also disclose your dental information to persons subject to jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration for purposes of reporting adverse events associated with product defects or problems, to enable product recalls, repairs or replacements, to track products, or to conduct activities required by the Food and Drug Administration. We may also, when we are authorized by law to do so, notify a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or otherwise be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition.

Secretary of HHS: We will disclose your health information to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services when required to investigate or determine compliance with HIPAA.

Victims of Abuse, Neglect, or Domestic Violence: We may use and disclose dental information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may share your dental information if it is necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others. We may share dental information when necessary to help law enforcement officials capture a person who has admitted to being part of a crime or has escaped from legal custody.

Workers Compensation: We may disclose dental information when authorized or necessary to comply with laws relating to workers compensation or other similar programs.

Health Oversight Activities: We may disclose dental information to an agency providing health oversight for oversight activities authorized by law. Including audits, civil, administrative, or criminal investigations or proceedings, inspections, licensure or disciplinary actions, or other authorized activities.

Law Enforcement: Under certain circumstances, we may disclose dental information to law enforcement officials. These circumstances include reporting required by certain laws (such as the reporting of certain types of wounds), pursuant to certain subpoenas or court orders, reporting limited information concerning identification and location at the request of a law enforcement official, reports regarding suspected victims of crimes at the request of a law enforcement official reporting death, crimes on our premises, and crimes in emergencies.

Appointment Reminders: We may use and disclose dental information for purposes of sending you appointment emails, text messages or otherwise reminding you of your appointments.

Alternative and Additional Dental Services: We may use and disclose dental information to furnish you with information about health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you, and to describe or recommend treatment alternatives.

4. YOUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

You Have the Right to:

1. Look at or get copies of certain parts of your dental information. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format that you request unless it is not practical for us to do so. You must make your request in writing. You may get the form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You may also request access by sending a letter to the contact person listed at the end of this notice. If you request copies, we will charge you \$1.00 for each page, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

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2. Receive a list of all the times we or our business associates shared your dental information for purposes other than treatment, payment, and health care operations and other specified exceptions.
3. You have the right to request additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI by submitting a written request to the Privacy Official. Your written request must include (1) what information you want to limit, (2) if you want to limit our use, disclosure or both, and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply. We are not required to agree to your request except in the case where the disclosure is to a health plan for purposes of carrying out payment or health care operations, and the information pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you, or a person on your behalf (other than the health plan), has paid our practice in full.
4. Request that we communicate with you about your dental information by different means or to different locations. Your request that we communicate your dental information to you by different means or at different locations must be made in writing to the contact person listed at the end of this notice. Your request must specify the alternative means or location, and provide satisfactory explanation of how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. However, if we are unable to contact you using the ways or locations you have requested we may contact you using the information we have.
5. Request that we change certain parts of your dental information. We may deny your request if we did not create the information that you want changed or for certain other reasons. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation. You may respond with a statement of disagreement that will be added to the information you wanted changed. If we accept your request to change the information, we will make reasonable efforts to tell others, including people you name, of the change and to include the changes in any further sharing of that information.
6. If you have received this notice electronically, and wish to receive a paper copy, you have the right to obtain a paper copy by making a request in writing to the contact person listed at the end of this notice.
7. With the exception of certain disclosures, you have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information; you must submit your request in writing to the Privacy Official. 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 the additional requests.
8. You will receive notifications of breaches of your unsecured protected health information as required by law.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you have any questions about this notice, or if you think that we may have violated your privacy rights, please contact us. You may contact us to submit a complaint or submit requests involving any of your rights in Section 4 of this notice by writing to the following address:

Apex General Dentistry, Tina W. Shih, D.D.S., P.A.
2081 Shepherd's Vineyard Dr.
Suite 102
Apex, North Carolina 27502
(919) 362-9216

You may also submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; we will provide you with the address 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.