

Austin Perinatal Associates

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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.

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 August 1, 2003 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 significant change in our policy practice 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 an additional copy of this Notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations.

For example:

Treatment: We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you.

Payment: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you.

Healthcare Operations: We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, licensing or credentialing activities.

Your Authorization: In addition to our use of your healthcare 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. Your requests must be in writing and may also revoke it (in writing) at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosure permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us 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 in writing that we may do so.

Persons Involved In Care: We may use or disclose health information to notify or assist in the 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 and disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional 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, sonogram reports or other medical forms of health information.

Marketing Health-Related Services: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

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

Abuse or Neglect: We may disclose your health 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 disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others.

National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institution or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards or letters).

PATIENT RIGHTS

Access: You have the right to look at or get 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 practicably do so. 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, postage and staff time.

Disclosure Accounting: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes of treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain other activities for the last six years but not before August 1, 2003. If you request this accounting information more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests.

Restrictions: You have the right to request additional restrictions on our use and disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but will abide by your requests with the only exception being in an emergency.

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. Your request must be in writing and it must explain why the information should be amended. We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

QUESTIONS & COMPLAINTS

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, you may use the contact information below. We are required to abide by the terms of our *Notice of Privacy Practice* currently in effect. We reserve the right to make revisions or changes to this Notice.

We support your right to privacy of your health information. We will provide you with the address to file a federal complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

Contact Officer: Jinnie Nutt, Practice Manager, Telephone: (512) 206-0101

Patient Signature: _____ Date: _____