

# BLUE BONNET ENDODONTICS

4840 W. Panther Creek Drive, Ste. 205, The Woodlands, TX 77381

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**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.**

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We respect our legal obligation to keep health information that identifies you private. We are obligated by law to give you notice of our privacy practices. This Notice describes how we protect your health information and what rights you have regarding it.

## **TREATMENT, PAYMENT, AND HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS**

The most common reason why we use or disclose your health information is for treatment, payment or health care operations. Examples of how we use or disclose information for treatment purposes are: setting up an appointment for you; examining your teeth; prescribing medications and faxing them to be filled; referring you to another doctor or clinic for other health care or services; or getting copies of your health information from another professional that you may have seen before us. Examples of how we use or disclose your health information for payment purposes are: asking you about your health or dental care plans, or other sources of payment; preparing and sending bills or claims; and collecting unpaid amounts (either ourselves or through a collection agency or attorney). "Health care operations" mean those administrative and managerial functions that we have to do in order to run our office. Examples of how we use or disclose your health information for health care operations are: financial or billing audits; internal quality assurance; personnel decisions; participation in managed care plans; defense of legal matters; business planning; and outside storage of our records.

We routinely use your health information inside our office for these purposes without any special permission. If we need to disclose your health information outside of our office for these reasons, we usually will not ask you for special written permission.

## **USES AND DISCLOSURES FOR OTHER REASONS WITHOUT PERMISSION**

In some limited situations, the law allows or requires us to use or disclose your health information without your permission. Not all of these situations will apply to us; some may never come up at our office at all. Such uses or disclosures are:

- when a state or federal law mandates that certain health information be reported for a specific purpose;
- for public health purposes, such as contagious disease reporting, investigation or surveillance; and notices to and from the federal Food and Drug Administration regarding drugs or medical devices;
- disclosures to governmental authorities about victims of suspected abuse, neglect or domestic violence;
- uses and disclosures for health oversight activities, such as for the licensing of doctors; for audits by Medicare or Medicaid; or for investigation of possible violations of health care laws;
- disclosures for judicial and administrative proceedings, such as in response to subpoenas or orders of courts or administrative agencies;
- disclosures for law enforcement purposes, such as to provide information about someone who is or is suspected to be a victim of a crime; to provide information about a crime at our office; or to report a crime that happened somewhere else;
- disclosure to a medical examiner to identify a dead person or to determine the cause of death; or to funeral directors to aid in burial; or to organizations that handle organ or tissue donations;
- uses or disclosures for health related research;
- uses and disclosures to prevent a serious threat to health or safety;
- uses or disclosures for specialized government functions, such as for the protection of the president or high ranking government officials; for lawful national intelligence activities; for military purposes; or for the evaluation and health of members of the foreign service;
- disclosures of de-identified information;
- disclosures relating to worker's compensation programs;
- disclosures of a "limited data set" for research, public health, or health care operations;
- incidental disclosures that are an unavoidable by-product of permitted uses or disclosures;
- disclosures to "business associates" who perform health care operations for us and who commit to respect the privacy of your health information;

Unless you object, we will also share relevant information about your care with your family or friends who are helping you with your dental care.

## **APPOINTMENT REMINDERS**

We may call or write to remind you of scheduled appointments, or that it is time to make a routine appointment. We may also call or write to notify you of other treatments or services available at our office that might help you. Unless you tell us otherwise, we will mail you an appointment reminder on a post card, and/or leave you a reminder message on your home answering machine or with someone who answers your phone if you are not home.

## **OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES**

We will not make any other uses or disclosures of your health information unless you sign a written "authorization form." The content of an "authorization form" is determined by federal law. Sometimes, we may initiate the authorization process if the use or disclosure is our idea. Sometimes, you may initiate the process if it's your idea for us to send your information to someone else. Typically, in this situation you will give us a properly completed authorization form, or you can use one of ours.

If we initiate the process and ask you to sign an authorization form, you do not have to sign it. If you do not sign the authorization, we cannot make the use or disclosure. If you do sign one, you may revoke it at any time unless

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## AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF IDENTIFYING HEALTH INFORMATION

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I authorize the professional office of my dentist named above to release health information identifying me [including if applicable, information about HIV infection or AIDS, information about substance abuse treatment, and information about mental health services] under the following terms and conditions:

1. Detailed description of the information to be released:
2. To whom may the information be released [name(s) or class(es) of recipients]:
3. The purpose(s) for the release (if the authorization is initiated by the individual, it is permissible to state "at the request of the individual" as the purpose, if desired by the individual):
4. Expiration date or event relating to the individual or purpose for the release:

It is completely your decision whether or not to sign this authorization form. We cannot refuse to treat you if you choose not to sign this authorization.

If you sign this authorization, you can revoke it later. The only exception to your right to revoke is if we have already acted in reliance upon the authorization. If you want to revoke your authorization, send us a written or electronic note telling us that your authorization is revoked. Send this note to the office contact person listed at the top of this form.

When your health information is disclosed as provided in this authorization, the recipient often has no legal duty to protect its confidentiality. In many cases, the recipient may re-disclose the information as he/she wishes. Sometimes, state or federal law changes this possibility.

[For marketing authorizations, include, as applicable: We will receive direct or indirect remuneration from a third party for disclosing your identifiable health information in accordance with this authorization.]

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS FORM. I AM SIGNING IT VOLUNTARILY. I AUTHORIZE THE DISCLOSURE OF MY HEALTH INFORMATION AS DESCRIBED IN THIS FORM.

By law, we must abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices until we choose to change it. We reserve the right to change this notice at any time as allowed by law. If we change this Notice, the new privacy practices will apply to your health information that we already have as well as to such information that we may generate in the future. If we change our Notice of Privacy Practices, we will post the new notice in our office, have copies available in our office, and post it on our Web site.

#### **COMPLAINTS**

If you think that we have not properly respected the privacy of your health information, you are free to complain to us or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. We will not retaliate against you if you make a complaint. If you want to complain to us, send a written complaint to the office contact person at the address, fax or E mail shown at the beginning of this Notice. If you prefer, you can discuss your complaint in person or by phone.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you want more information about our privacy practices, call or visit the office contact person at the address or phone number shown at the beginning of this Notice.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT**

I acknowledge that I received a copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices.