

**NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES  
For Beltline Podiatry PC**

*THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW CAREFULLY.*

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”) is a federal program that requires that all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed by us in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, are kept properly confidential. This Act gives you, the patient, significant new rights to understand and control how your health information is used. “HIPAA” provides penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information.

As required by “HIPAA”, we have prepared this explanation of how we are required to maintain the privacy of your health information and how we may use and disclose your health information.

We may use and disclose your medical records only for each of the following purposes: treatment, payment and health care operations.

- ◆ **Treatment** means providing, coordinating, or managing health care and related services by one or more health care providers. An example of this would be a physical examination.
- ◆ **Payment** means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing or collection activities, and utilization review. An example of this would be sending a bill and any necessary medical records for your visit to your insurance company for payment.
- ◆ **Health care operations** include the business aspects of running our practice, such as conducting quality assessment and improvement activities, auditing functions, cost-management analysis, and customer service. An example of this would be an internal quality assessment review.

We may also create and distribute de-identified health information by removing all references to individually identifiable information.

We may also 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. Such contact will be done through the telephone unless otherwise directed by you, the patient.

Any other uses and disclosures will be made only with your written authorization. We are not required to accept any restrictions requested by you, however, if we agree to abide by the restrictions, we must abide until a written request to revoke is received from you.

You have the following rights with respect to your protected health information, which you can exercise by presenting a written request to the Privacy Officer:

- ◆ The right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information, including those related to disclosures to family members, other relatives, close personal friends, or any other person identified by you. We are, however, not required to agree to a requested restriction. If we do agree to a restriction, we must abide by it unless you agree in writing to remove it.
- ◆ The right to reasonable requests to receive confidential communications of protected health information from us by alternative means or at alternative locations.
- ◆ The right to inspect and copy your protected health information.
- ◆ The right to amend your protected health information. We are, however, not required to agree to the amendment if we feel that the information is for the good of the patient.
- ◆ The right to receive an accounting of disclosures of protected health information.
- ◆ The right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us upon request.

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information.

This notice is effective 4/14/2003 and we are required to abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of our Notice of Privacy Practices and to make the new notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. We will post and you may request a written copy of a revised Notice of Privacy Practices from this office.

You have recourse if you feel that your privacy protections have been violated. You have the right to file a written complaint with our office, or with the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, about violations of the provisions of this notice or policies and procedures of our office. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Please contact us for more information  
Or to file a complaint:

Beltline Podiatry PC  
Attn: Wendy Sutherland, Compliance Officer  
739 East Beltline NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49525  
Phone (616) 949-3668

For more information about HIPAA  
Or to file a complaint:

The U.S. Department of Health &  
Human Services  
Office of Civil Rights  
200 Independence Ave SW  
Washington DC 20201  
(202) 619-0257  
Toll Free: (877) 696-6775