

James D. Wethe, MD complies with the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996) regarding the security and confidentiality of your medical record information. The following is a summary of your rights regarding the privacy of your protected healthcare information (EHI/PHI).

Your Medical Record

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. This record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnosis treatments and a plan for future care of treatment. Medical records are considered 'protected healthcare information' or PHI. In electronic form, they are referred to as ePHI.

1. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Healthcare Information

James D. Wethe, MD is required to protect the privacy of your medical/health information. We respect the privacy and confidentiality of your protected healthcare information.

ePHI/PHI (Electronic/Protected Healthcare Information - your medical record) may be used and released by your physician or other medical practitioner and by our office staff and others outside of our office who are involved in your care and treatment.

- For the purpose of providing quality health care services to you.
- For the purpose of paying your health care bills
- To support the normal business operations of the physician's practices
- To participate with government compliance activities to prevent fraud and abuse.

You may at any time request a listing of our business associates and normal business activities that may require the disclosure of your ePHI/PHI.

- We will make all reasonable efforts to communicate your rights in a language you understand.
- We will only release information to someone other than you, if you have named another individual to us as an authorized party to receive your ePHI/PHI.
- In the event of an emergency, we will make all reasonable efforts to secure consent from you prior to treatment.
- If you are unable to provide consent, we will only release information from your medical record that is minimally necessary for someone to provide care to you safely and we will notify you of that released medical record information when it is more appropriate.

2. Treatment

We may disclose your ePHI/PHI to other third parties, including physicians, specialists, laboratory technicians, and hospital

personnel in order to provide, manage, and/or coordinate your health care and other related services.

3. Payment

Your ePHI/PHI will be used as needed to obtain payment for your health care services that includes allowing your health insurance company to review your ePHI/PHI for medical necessity.

4. Healthcare and Business Operations

We may use or disclose your ePHI/PHI in order to:

- Perform quality assessment activities
- Conduct employee review activities
- Assist in the training of medical students
- Complete government compliance activities and internal clinical studies
- Provide you with educational information about treatment alternatives or other health-related information
- Send you information about our organization that we believe will be useful to you. You may contact us to request that these materials not be sent to you.

5. Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement

We may use or release your ePHI/PHI as required for law enforcement purposes. These law enforcement purposes include:

- Legal processes and otherwise as required by law
- Limited information pertaining to victims of a crime
- Suspicion that death has occurred as a result of criminal conduct
- In the event that a crime occurs on the premises of the practice or
- Medical emergency and it is likely that a crime has occurred (not on the premises)
- Judicial or administrative proceedings
- In response to an order of a court or administrative tribunal (the extent such disclosure is expressly authorized)
- In certain conditions in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process

- To prevent or lessen a serious and immediate threat to the health or safety of a person or the public
- As necessary for law enforcement authorities to identify or apprehend an individual
- To comply with worker's compensation law and other similar legally-established programs.

6. Public Health

We may release your ePHI/PHI to a public health authority as required by law for purposes of:

- Controlling disease, injury or disability, to a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or may otherwise be at risk of contracting or spreading the disease or condition
- To receive reports of child or adult abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.

7. Government Agencies

We may release ePHI/PHI to a government health oversight agency that oversees the healthcare system, its government benefit and regulatory programs and/or civil rights laws for activities authorized by law to:

- Perform provider chart audits
- Perform investigations
- Perform inspections
- Report adverse events, product defects or problems, biologic product deviations, and to track products
- Enable product recalls; to make repairs or replacement
- Conduct post marketing surveillance or for activities deemed necessary by appropriate military command authorities for the purpose of a determination by the Department of Veterans Affairs of your eligibility for benefits or to foreign military authority if you are a member of that foreign military service.
- Assist authorized federal officials in conducting national security and intelligence activities, including for the provision of protective services to the President or others legally authorized.

8. Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation

We may release ePHI/PHI to a coroner, medical examiner, and/or funeral director as follows:

- For identification purposes
- For use in determining cause of death
- For the coroner or medical examiner to perform other duties authorized by law
- In reasonable anticipation of death
- For cadaveric organ, eye or tissue donation purposes.

9. Research

We may release your ePHI/PHI to researchers when their research has been approved by an institutional review board which has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your ePHI/PHI.

We may use or release your ePHI/PHI if you are in inmate of a correctional facility and your physician created or received your ePHI/PHI in the course of providing care to you.