

**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.**

**Uses and Disclosures:** Our practice collects personal health information on you that may be used for three primary purposes:

1. **Treatment** – For example, we will prepare a record of information each time we see you in our office while you are under our care. This medical record is used to keep track of changes in your condition as well as remind us of your past care, treatment, allergies and other facts relevant to your overall health. This information may be passed on to other providers as part of a coordinated health care program for you.
2. **Payment** - We must report elements of your personal health information, such as specific treatments, visits, tests and surgeries along with related diagnoses to third party payers to properly determine benefits payable on your behalf for the services we render. We only report the minimum necessary information to process the claim.
3. **Health Care Operations** – In order to provide you with high-quality health care, we often need to be able to use your personal health information for purposes such as pre-registering you at the hospital if you ever need to be admitted or providing your pharmacy with a prescription so that it is ready to pick up when you arrive. Again, we are committed to using the minimum necessary information to achieve these purposes.

This practice uses an electronic health record information system (the “**EHR System**”), in coordination with Northwestern Memorial Hospital. The collection and use of all information through the EHR System is primarily for the purpose of treatment of patients by NMH, this medical practice and other medical practices in a clinically integrated care setting. All information collected through the EHR System may also be shared with, and used by, NMH and certain other hospitals, academic institutions, and health care providers that perform medical or research activities on NMH’s campus or otherwise in conjunction with NMH (including, but not limited to, Northwestern University, the Feinberg School of Medicine, Children’s Memorial Hospital, and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago) for the following related activities, including without limitation: (a) conducting peer review; (b) promoting quality assurance; (c) mortality and morbidity analysis; (d) conducting utilization review; (e) evaluating and improving the quality of care; (f) promoting and maintaining professional standards; (g) examining costs and maintaining cost control; (h) conducting medical audits; (i) assisting the medical staff membership and credentialing process; (j) performing data quality management; (k) improving the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare; (l) conducting research; (m) extracting data from the EHR System and any related database and incorporating it into a data warehouse maintained by NMH. The EHR System is not equipped to segregate such data as mental health, HIV, drug and alcohol abuse and genetic testing information.

In addition, we will use or disclose your personal health information under the following circumstances:

- When we receive a valid authorization from you
- If you give us an oral authorization
- If we are required by law to disclose your personal health information to others such as public health agencies

**Required Disclosures:** We are required to disclose the information to you if you request it and we are required to disclose the information to the US DHHS for compliance determinations of this practice. We may disclose information about you without your authorization for the following reasons:

- When required by law, for judicial proceedings or law enforcement

- For workers compensation
- For uses and disclosures about decedents
- Uses and disclosures for cadaveric tissue donation
- To avert a serious threat to health or safety
- Disclosures about abuse or neglect or domestic violence

Other uses and disclosures will be made only with your written authorization and you may revoke such authorization by writing to us at our practice address or delivering a written revocation to us in person.

We may periodically call you to remind you of appointments and we may advise you of treatment alternatives and benefits that may be of interest to you based on your health condition or status.

### **Your Rights:**

You have a right to request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your personal health information. Our practice is not obligated to accept your restrictions. However, if we do accept your request, it must be complied with fully on our part.

You have a right to inspect and have a copy of your personal health information. If you would like a copy please request the information in writing or use a form available in our office for the request.

You have a right to request amendments to your personal information. We will not amend any information we did not create. We are not obligated to make an amendment to your personal health information, but we will include your request for the amendment as part of your personal health information.

You have a right to an accounting for the prior six years (but no earlier than the effective date of this notification) for uses and disclosure for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations of our practice.

You have a right to a paper copy of this notification. The current version will be provided to you at your request.

### **Our Duties:**

We are obligated by law to protect your privacy and we will do our best to fulfill that duty to you. We will abide by all the terms in this notification but we reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and the personal health information it protects. You are entitled to a copy of those changes. You may always see the current notice posted on our website <http://www.veincare.com> or <http://www.gensurg.com>.

We will do our very best to make certain your rights are protected and we carry out our responsibilities to you. If you have any complaint, we encourage you to contact us. It is our sincere desire to preserve your privacy and fulfill our duties. We will take no retaliatory action against any person for exercising their right to the resolution of a grievance. To the contrary, we encourage your comments and criticisms. If we cannot resolve the issue for you, you have the right to file a grievance and make a complaint to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

To make a complaint or ask any questions concerning this policy, please contact the privacy officer directly at 312-649-6562.

**Effective Date: May 1, 2011**

