

1. How South Florida Spine Institute May Use or Disclose Your Health Information

South Florida Spine Institute collects health information from you and stores it in a chart and on a computer. This is your medical record. The medical record is the property of South Florida Spine Institute, but the information in the medical record belongs to you. South Florida Spine Institute protects the privacy of your health information. The law permits South Florida Spine Institute to use or disclose your health information for the following purposes:

1. Treatment. South Florida Spine Institute may use your health information to coordinate care within the practice and with others involved in your care. For example, physicians involved in your care will need information about your symptoms in order to prescribe appropriate medications. South Florida Spine Institute may disclose your health care to individuals outside of the practice to others involved in your care including family members, pharmacists, suppliers of medical equipment, or other health care professionals.

2. Payment. South Florida Spine Institute may use your health information in invoices to collect payment from third parties for the care you receive from South Florida Spine Institute. For example, South Florida Spine Institute may be required by your health insurer to provide information regarding your health care status so that the insurer will reimburse you or also may need to obtain prior approval from your insurer and may need to explain to the insurer your need for health care that will be provided to you.

3. Regular health care operations. South Florida Spine Institute may use and disclose health information for its own operations to facilitate the function of South Florida Spine Institute and as necessary to provide quality care to all of our patients. South Florida Spine Institute includes such activities as:

- Quality assessment and improvement activities.
- Activities designed to improve health or reduce healthcare costs.
- Professional review and performance evaluation.
- Review and auditing, including compliance reviews, medical reviews and compliance programs.

4. Information provided to you. South Florida Spine Institute may use and disclose your health information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for a doctor's office visit including mailing a reminder to your home or leaving a message on your home answering machine.

5. Notifications and communication with family. We may disclose your health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care about your location, your general condition or in the event of your death. If you are able and available to agree or object, we will give you the opportunity to object prior to making this notification. If you are unable or unavailable to agree or object, our health professionals will use their best judgment in communication with your family and others.

6. Required by law. As required by law, we may use and disclose your health information.

7. Public health. As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health authorities for purposes related to: preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability; reporting child abuse or neglect; report domestic violence; reporting to the Food and Drug Administration problems with products and reactions to medications; and reporting disease or infection exposure.

8. Health oversight activities. We may disclose your health information to health agencies during the course of audits, investigations, inspections, licensure and other proceedings.

9. Judicial and administrative proceedings. We may disclose your health information in the course of any administrative or judicial proceeding.

10. Law enforcement. We may disclose your health information to a law enforcement official for purposes such as identifying of locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person, complying with a court order or subpoena and other law enforcement purposes.

11. Deceased person information. We may disclose your health information to coroners, medical examiners and funeral directors.

12. Organ donation. We may disclose your health information to organizations

II. When South Florida Spine Institute May Not Use or Disclose Your Health Information

Except as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices, South Florida Spine Institute will not use or disclose your health information without your written authorization. If you do authorize South Florida Spine Institute to use or disclose your health information for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

III. Your Health Information Rights

1. You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. South Florida Spine Institute is not required to agree to the restriction that you requested. If you wish to make a request for restrictions, please contact the Privacy Officer at South Florida Spine Institute.
2. You have the right to receive your health information through a reasonable alternative means or at an alternative location. For example, you may request that South Florida Spine Institute conducts communications pertaining to your health information with you privately with no other family members present. You can request this information in writing and South Florida Spine Institute will not request that you provide any reasons for your request and will attempt to honor your reasonable requests for confidential communications.
3. You have the right to inspect and copy your health information.

4. You have a right to request that South Florida Spine Institute amend your health information that is incorrect or incomplete. South Florida Spine Institute is not required to change your health information and will provide you with information about our denial and how you can disagree with the denial.

5. You have a right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by South Florida Spine Institute except that South Florida Spine Institute does not have to account for the disclosures described in parts 1 (treatment), 2 (payment), 3 (health care operations), 4 (information provided to you, and 15 (specialized government functions) of section I of this *Notice of Privacy Practices*.

6. You have a right to a paper copy of this *Notice of Privacy Practices*.

If you would like to have a more detailed explanation of these rights or if you would like to exercise one or more of these rights, contact the office manager of this physician's office or the Compliance Hotline at 305-532-2411.

IV. Changes to this Notice of Privacy Practices

South Florida Spine Institute reserves the right to amend this Notice of Privacy Practices at any time in the future, and to make the new provisions effective for all information that it maintains, including information that was created or received prior to the date of such amendment. Until such amendment is made, South Florida Spine Institute is required by law to comply with this Notice. Any amendments made to the *Notice of Privacy Practices* will be posted in the office waiting room within 10 days of changes and a paper copy is available upon request.

V. Complaints

Complaints about this *Notice of Privacy Practices* or how South Florida Spine Institute handles your health information should be directed to:

Privacy Officer

South Florida Spine Institute
4302 Alton Road, Suite 115
Miami Beach, Florida 33140
Compliance Hotline: 305-532-2411

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this office handles a complaint, you may submit a formal complaint to:

Region IV, Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 3B70
61 Forsyth Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303-8909

Voice Phone (404) 562-7886
TAX (404) 562-7881
TDD (404) 331-2867

For all complaints filed by e-mail, send to:
OCCRCComplaint@hhs.gov.

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