

Southwest Bone & Joint Institute  
HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective Date: 07/01/2015

**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.**

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact Mike McMillan.

**OUR OBLIGATIONS:**

We are required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of protected health information
- Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices regarding health information about you
- Follow the terms of our notice that is currently in effect

**HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION:**

The following describes the ways we may use and disclose health information that identifies you ("Health Information"). Except for the purposes described below, we will use and disclose Health Information only with your written permission. You may revoke such permission at any time by writing to our practice Privacy Officer.

***For Treatment.*** We may use and disclose Health Information for your treatment and to provide you with treatment-related health care services. For example, we may disclose Health Information to doctors, nurses, technicians, or other personnel, including people outside our office, who are involved in your medical care and need the information to provide you with medical care.

***For Payment.*** We may use and disclose Health Information so that we or others may bill and receive payment from you, an insurance company or a third party for the treatment and services you received. For example, we may give your health plan information about you so that they will pay for your treatment.

***For Health Care Operations.*** We may use and disclose Health Information for health care operations purposes. These uses and disclosures are necessary to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office. For example, we may use and disclose information to make sure the obstetrical or gynecological care you receive is of the highest quality. We also may share information

with other entities that have a relationship with you (for example, your health plan) for their health care operation activities.

***Appointment Reminders, Treatment Alternatives and Health Related Benefits and Services.*** We may use and disclose Health Information to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment with us. We also may use and disclose Health Information to tell you about treatment alternatives or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

***Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care.*** When appropriate, we may share Health Information with a person who is involved in your medical care or payment for your care, such as your family or a close friend. We also may notify your family about your location or general condition or disclose such information to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort.

***Research.*** Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose Health Information for research. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health of patients who received one treatment to those who received another, for the same condition. Before we use or disclose Health Information for research, the project will go through a special approval process. Even without special approval, we may permit researchers to look at records to help them identify patients who may be included in their research project or for other similar purposes, as long as they do not remove or take a copy of any Health Information.

#### **SPECIAL SITUATIONS:**

***As Required by Law.*** We will disclose Health Information when required to do so by international, federal, state or local law.

***To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.*** We may use and disclose Health Information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.

***Business Associates.*** We may disclose Health Information to our business associates that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. For example, we may use another company to perform billing services on our behalf. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

***Organ and Tissue Donation.*** If you are an organ donor, we may use or release Health Information to organizations that handle organ procurement or other entities engaged in procurement, banking or transportation of organs, eyes or tissues to facilitate organ, eye or tissue donation and transplantation.

***Military and Veterans.*** If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release Health Information as required by military command authorities. We also may release