



BLOOMINGTON PEDIATRICS

306 Saint Joseph Drive
Bloomington, IL 61701
Phone: 309-662-0504
Fax: 309-663-7645
www.bloomingtonpediatrics.com

HIPAA NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

HIPAA refers to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

This Notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. This Notice provides you with information to protect the privacy of your confidential healthcare information, also known as protected health information (PHI). This Notice also describes the privacy rights you have and how you can exercise those rights. Please review it carefully.

If you have any questions about this Notice, please contact our practice Privacy Officer in writing at:

Attn: Privacy Officer
Bloomington Pediatrics, LTD
306 Saint Joseph Drive
Bloomington, IL 61701

or by phone at 309-662-0504.

This Notice was effective as of 7/20/2014, revised 8/2023 and 2/2025 to reflect updates in HIPAA Final Rules.

OUR COMMITMENT REGARDING YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Bloomington Pediatrics is committed to maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of our patients' personal information. This Notice of Privacy Practices applies to Bloomington Pediatrics and health plans covered by the privacy regulation, for example: health benefit plans, dental plans, employee assistance plans (EAPs) and pharmacy benefits programs (collectively, the Plans). The Plans are required by federal and state law to protect the privacy of your individually identifiable PHI and other personal information. We are required to provide you with this Notice about our policies, safeguards, and practices. When the Plans use or disclose your PHI, the Plans are bound by the terms of the Notice, or the revised Notice, if applicable.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

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 or disclose PHI 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.

Some types of health information are particularly sensitive, and the law, with limited exceptions, may require that we obtain your written permission, or in some instances, a court order, to use or disclose that information. Sensitive health information includes information dealing with mental health and developmental disabilities, HIV/AIDS, alcohol and drug abuse treatment, genetic testing, and genetic counseling.

If someone has been appointed to act for you, a copy of the document appointing that person must be provided to us. We will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the person has authority and can act for you before we take any action.

For Care and Treatment

We may use and disclose PHI to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment with us. We may use and disclose PHI for your treatment and provide you with treatment-related health care services. We may also use and disclose PHI to tell you about treatment alternatives or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

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. We will never share any substance abuse treatment records without your written permission.

For Payment

We may use and disclose PHI 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.

Example: we may give your health plan information about you so that they will pay for your treatment. If appropriate, we may share PHI with a person who is involved in your medical care or payment for your care.

For Health Care Operations

We may use and disclose PHI for health care operations purposes. These uses and disclosures are necessary to make sure that all our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office.

Example: we may use and disclose information to make sure the pediatric care you receive is of the highest quality. We may also share information with other entities that have a relationship with you (for example, your health plan) for their healthcare operation activities.

Research

Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose PHI for Research.

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 PHI 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 PHI 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 PHI 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 PHI 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.

Example: we may use another company to perform our billing services on our behalf. All 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. We may disclose immunization records to schools to support public health efforts if we obtain and document an oral or written agreement from the parent or guardian. All immunizations given by Bloomington Pediatrics are entered into the Illinois Immunization Registry.

Organ and Tissue Donation

If you are an organ donor, we may use or disclose PHI to organizations that 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 PHI as required by military command authorities. We may also release PHI to the appropriate foreign military authority if you are a member of a foreign military.

Workers' Compensation

We may release Health Information for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illnesses.

Public Health Risks

We may disclose Health Information for public health activities. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury or disability, report births and deaths, report child abuse or child neglect, report reactions to medications or problems with products, notify people of recalls of products they may be using, a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition, and the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree or when required or authorized by law.

*Health Oversight Activities**

We may disclose Health Information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the healthcare system, government programs and compliance with civil rights laws.

*Lawsuits and Disputes**

If you are involved in a lawsuit dispute, we may disclose Health Information in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose Health Information in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

*Law Enforcement**

We may release Health Information if asked by a law enforcement official if the information is:

- (1) in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process,
- (2) limited information to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person,

(3) about the victim of a crime even if, under certain, very limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement,

(4) about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct,

(5) about criminal conduct on our premises, and

(6) in an emergency to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

*Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors**

We may release Health Information to a coroner or medical examiner.

Example: this may be necessary to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may also release Health Information to funeral directors as necessary for their duties.

**Please Note:* Bloomington Pediatrics will not use or disclose an individual's PHI to conduct a criminal, civil or administrative investigation against, to impose liability against, or seek to identify a person for the mere act of seeking, obtaining, providing or facilitating reproductive health care that was lawfully provided. Requests for PHI cannot be used related to criminal, civil or administrative investigations against a person; where the person is being investigated for the mere act of seeking, obtaining, providing, or facilitating reproductive health care, and where the reproductive health care was lawfully provided.

Data Breach Notification Purposes

We may use or disclose your Protected Health Information to provide legally required notices of unauthorized access to or disclosure of your Health Information.

National Security and Intelligence Activities

We may release Health Information to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

Protective Services for the President and Others

We may disclose Health Information to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized persons, or foreign heads of state, or to conduct special investigations.

Inmates or Individuals in Custody

If you are an inmate of a corrections institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release Health Information to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be necessary:

(1) for the institution to provide you with health care,

(2) to protect your health and safety, or the health and safety of others, or

(3) the safety and security of the correctional institution.

USES AND DISCLOSURES THAT REQUIRE US TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT & OPT OUT

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care

Unless you object, we may disclose to a member of your family, a relative, a close friend or any other person you identify, your Protected Health information that directly relates to that person's involvement in your health care. If you are unable to agree or object to such a disclosure, we may disclose such information as necessary if we determine that it is in your best interest based on our professional judgement. If someone has been appointed to act for you, a copy of the document appointing that person must be provided to us. We will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the person has authority and can act for you before we take any action.

Disaster Relief

We may disclose your PHI to disaster relief organizations that seek it to coordinate your care or notify family and friends of your location or condition in a disaster. We will provide you with an opportunity to agree or object to such a disclosure whenever we can practically do so.

Immunizations

All immunizations given by Bloomington Pediatrics are entered into the Illinois Immunization Registry. If you wish to opt out of this automatic disclosure, you may indicate this on the patient registration form and/or advise a staff member at the reception desk.

YOUR WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED FOR OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES

The following uses and disclosures of your Protected Health Information will be made only with your written authorization:

1. Uses and disclosures of PHI for marketing purposes
2. Disclosures that constitute a sale of your PHI

Other uses and disclosures of PHI not covered by this Notice, or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written authorization. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it at any time by submitting a written revocation to our Privacy Officer and we will no longer disclose PHI under the authorization. However, disclosures that we made in reliance of your authorization before it was revoked will not be affected by the revocation.

YOUR RIGHTS:

You have the following rights regarding the Health Information we have about you.

Right to Inspect and Copy

You have a right to inspect and copy Health Information that may be used to make a decision about your care or payment for your care. This includes medical and billing records, other than psychotherapy notes*.

To inspect and copy this Health Information, you must make your request, in writing, to Bloomington Pediatrics. We have up to 30 days to make your PHI available to you and we may charge you a reasonable fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request. We may not charge you a fee if you need the information for a claim for benefits under the Social Security Act or any other state or federal need-based benefit program.

We may deny your request in certain limited circumstances. If we do deny your request, you have the right to have the denial reviewed by a licensed healthcare professional who was not directly involved in the denial of your request, and we will comply with the outcome of the review.

**We do not create or maintain psychotherapy notes at this practice.*

Right to an Electronic Copy of Electronic Medical Records

If your PHI is maintained in an electronic format, known as an electronic medical record or an electronic health record, you have the right to request that an electronic copy of your record be given to you or transmitted to another individual or entity. We will make every effort to provide access to your PHI in the format you request if it is readily producible in such a format. If the Protected Health Information is not readily producible in the format you request, your record will be provided in either our standard electronic format, or if you do not want this format, a readable hard copy will be provided. We may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for the labor associated with transmitting the electronic medical record.

Right to Get a Notice of a Breach

You have the right to be notified upon a breach of any of your unsecured PHI.

Right to Amend

If you feel that the Health Information we have is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for our office. To request an amendment, you must make your request in writing.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures

You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we have made of Health Information for purposes other than treatment, payment, and health care operations or for which you provided written authorization. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must make your request, in writing, to Bloomington Pediatrics.

Right to Request Restrictions

You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the Health Information we use or disclose for treatment, payment, or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the Health Information we disclose to someone involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend.

Example: you could ask that we not share information about a particular diagnosis or treatment with your spouse. To request a restriction, you must make your request, in writing. We are not required to agree to

your request unless you are asking us to restrict the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information to a health plan for payment or healthcare operation purposes and such information you wish to restrict pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you have paid us "out-of-pocket" in full. If we agree, we will comply with your request, unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

"Out-of-Pocket" Payments

If you paid "out-of-pocket" (or requested we not bill your health plan) in full for a specific item or service, you have the right to ask that your PHI, with respect to that item or service, not be disclosed to a health plan for purposes of payment or health care operations, and we will honor that request.

Right to Request Confidential Communications

You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location.

Example: you can ask that we only contact you by mail or at work. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate reasonable requests.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice

You have the right to a paper copy of this Notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this Notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this Notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this Notice. You may obtain a copy of this Notice at our website www.bloomingtonpediatrics.com. To obtain a paper copy of this Notice, ask at the check in window at the front desk or you may request one be sent to you. Requests for mailed copies must be made in writing.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE:

We reserve the right to change this Notice and make the new Notice apply to PHI we already have, as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of our current Notice at our office. The Notice will contain the effective date on the first page, in the top right-hand corner.

COMPLAINTS:

If you have any questions about this Notice, or believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our office or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be made in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

You may contact our office at:

Bloomington Pediatrics
306 St. Joseph Drive
Bloomington, IL 61701

You may contact the Secretary of the Dept. of HHS at:

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
200 Independence Ave., S.W.

For more information see: www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html