

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT EMAIL**

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH UNENCRYPTED EMAIL. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.**

### **SECURITY RISKS**

Most standard email providers such as Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc. do not provide a secured or encrypted means of communication. As a result, there is risk that any protected health information contained in an email may be disclosed to, or intercepted by, unauthorized third parties. Additionally, email messages accessible through personal computers, laptops, or phones have inherent privacy risks especially when the email account is provided by an employer, when the account is not password protected, or the account is shared. Use of more secure communications, such as phone, fax or mail is preferred and always an available alternative.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

When consenting to the use of email through such unsecured or unencrypted systems, you are accepting responsibility for any unauthorized access or disclosure to protected health information contained within the message. The Practice will not be responsible for unauthorized access of protected health information while in transmission and will not be responsible for safeguarding information once it is delivered. The Practice will take steps to ensure that any email with protected health information is protected prior to being sent to the requested address and will use the minimum necessary amount of protected health information when communicating with you.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

It is important to understand that emails will not be used to replace or facilitate communications between you and your physician and will not be considered private communications. There is no guarantee that the Practice will be actively monitoring the inbox so responses and replies sent to or received by you or the Practice may be hours or days apart. Email messages may be inadvertently missed or errors in transmissions may occur. The Practice will not be responsible for any issues caused by delays in communications. If you have an immediate need or an emergency situation, you must contact the Practice by telephone or dial 9-1-1 if applicable. Practice staff will be utilized to monitor the inbox in order to properly direct or respond to communications received. Therefore, any information considered sensitive should not be included in your communications.

At the Practice's discretion, any email message received or sent may become part of your medical record.