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For Our Patients

Information About Email Communication and Our Email Policies

You have asked to communicate with our office via email. To do so with safety and confidence, you must understand and agree to our guidelines. Please read the following information about email communication and our email policies. If you have any questions about what you read, please ask us or a member of our staff.

Following this information is an agreement that will protect your well-being and your confidentiality. If you understand our email policies and agree to adhere to them, please sign and date the form. We will give you a copy to take home. If, at any time, you wish to discontinue email communication with this office, please submit your request in writing to us or a member of our staff. Thank you for your cooperation.

- Please be aware that email communication is not a substitute for a face-to-face encounter with a physician.
- It is our practice to make every effort to protect your confidential information in all communication. *[Optional: List protection technology such as firewall, secure network, encryption, automatic logout, password protection, need-to-know access, etc.]* We acknowledge, however, that no email is 100% secure. Even the most carefully protected messages are stored on a computer's hard drive. Though it is unlikely, this information *could* be retrievable. We cannot guarantee against unknown privacy violations such as unauthorized access achieved by illegal activity.
- We ask you to limit your email communication with us: to ask routine, non-urgent medical questions; to schedule an appointment; or to report a mild reaction to treatment.
- We will communicate with you via email only if you are an established patient. That means that we will communicate with one another only in the context of care that began with a face-to-face encounter.
- All email communication will be printed out and a hard copy will be filed in your medical chart.
- We will try to respond to email messages within XX hours. However, there is no way to guarantee that this will occur, for a variety of legitimate reasons. *[Optional/examples: misaddressed email, server down, electric power failure, etc.]* If you do not get a response from this office within XX hours, it is up to you to contact us by telephone, mail, fax, or in person.
- We do not accept medication refill requests by email unless the request was preceded by a recent exam in the office. Even then, good medical practice may mean that it is necessary for you to be seen before we can refill your medication.
- We will do our best to avoid technical problems. However, if a computer virus infiltrates our system, we cannot guarantee that we could prevent it from inadvertently passing to your computer.
- If we are out of the office or if we are with other patients, a medical assistant will print out email messages for us and, at our direction, may respond to you on our behalf.
- If you fail to adhere to our email policies, we will discontinue our communication with you via email.

Please alert us to any questions you have about what you have read.