INVOLVE COMPARING THE HEALTH AND RECOVERY OF ALL PATIENTS WHO RECEIVED ONE MEDICATION TO THOSE WHO RECEIVED ANOTHER, FOR THE SAME CONDITION. ALL RESEARCH.

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 MARCIANNE SLOAN, FACILITY ADMINISTRATOR.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE?

THIS NOTICE APPLIES TO OUR MEDICAL PRACTICE AND TO THE FOLLOWING:
- ANY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL AUTHORIZED TO ENTER INFORMATION INTO YOUR OFFICE
- ALL DEPARTMENTS AND UNITS OF THIS OFFICE
- ANY MEMBER OF A VOLUNTEER GROUP WE ALLOW TO HELP YOU WHILE YOU ARE IN THE OFFICE
- ANY MEDICAL STUDENT, INTERNS, RESIDENT OR FELLOW THAT WE ALLOW TO HELP YOU WHILE YOU ARE IN THE OFFICE
- ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INSURANCE CARRIER, MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATION, CLINICAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION, DATA ANALYSIS ORGANIZATION, OR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ORGANIZATION THAT IS PARTICIPATING IN A REVIEW OF YOUR MEDICAL CARE
- ANY EMPLOYEES, STAFF AND OTHER OFFICE PERSONNEL;
- AND ALL OTHER ENTITIES, SITES AND LOCATIONS WHERE THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS IN THIS OFFICE PRACTICE AND FOLLOW THE TERMS OF THIS NOTICE.

IN ADDITION, THESE ENTITIES, SITES AND LOCATIONS MAY SHARE MEDICAL INFORMATION WITH EACH OTHER FOR TREATMENT, PAYMENT OR OPERATIONS PURPOSES AS DESCRIBED IN THIS NOTICE.

OUR PLEDGE REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION

WE UNDERSTAND THAT MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR HEALTH IS PERSONAL. WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROTECTING MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU. WE CREATE A RECORD OF THE CARE AND SERVICES YOU RECEIVE AT THIS OFFICE. WE NEED THIS RECORD TO PROVIDE YOU WITH QUALITY CARE AND TO COMPLY WITH CERTAIN LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

THIS NOTICE APPLIES TO ALL OF THE RECORDS OF YOUR CARE GENERATED BY THE OFFICE, WHETHER MADE BY OFFICE PERSONNEL OR YOUR PERSONAL DOCTOR. THIS NOTICE WILL TELL YOU ABOUT THE WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU. WE ALSO DESCRIBE YOUR RIGHTS AND CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS WE HAVE REGARDING THE USE AND DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION.

WE ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO:

- MAKE SURE THAT MEDICAL INFORMATION THAT IDENTIFIES YOU IS KEPT PRIVATE;
- GIVE YOU THIS NOTICE OF OUR LEGAL DUTIES AND PRIVACY PRACTICES WITH RESPECT TO MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU; AND FOLLOW THE TERMS OF THE NOTICE THAT IS CURRENTLY IN EFFECT.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES DESCRIBE DIFFERENT WAYS THAT WE USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION. FOR EACH CATEGORY OF USES OR DISCLOSURES WE WILL EXPLAIN WHAT WE MEAN AND TRY TO GIVE SOME EXAMPLES. NOT EVERY USE OR DISCLOSURE IN A CATEGORY WILL BE LISTED. HOWEVER, ALL OF THE WAYS WE ARE PERMITTED TO USE AND DISCLOSE INFORMATION WILL FALL WITHIN ONE OF THE CATEGORIES.

TREATMENT
- WE MAY USE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO PROVIDE YOU WITH MEDICAL TREATMENT OR SERVICES. WE MAY DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO DOCTORS, NURSES, TECHNICIANS, MEDICAL STUDENTS, OR OTHER OFFICE-PERSONNEL WHO ARE INVOLVED IN TAKING CARE OF YOU AT THE OFFICE.
- FOR EXAMPLE, A DOCTOR TREATING YOU FOR AN INTESTINAL CONDITION MAY NEED TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE DIABETES BECAUSE DIABETES MAY AFFECT THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR INTESTINAL PROBLEM.

IN ADDITION, THE DOCTOR MAY NEED TO TELL THE DIETITIAN IF YOU HAVE DIABETES SO THAT THE DIETITIAN CAN ADJUST YOUR DIET TO HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR DIABETES.

DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS OR OFFICES MAY USE OR DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU IN ORDER TO COORDINATE THE DIFFERENT THINGS YOU NEED, SUCH AS PRESCRIPTIONS, LAB WORK, ENDOSCOPY EXAMINATIONS AND X-RAYS.

WE ALSO MAY DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE OFFICE WHO MAY BE INVOLVED IN YOUR MEDICAL CARE AFTER YOU LEAVE THE OFFICE, SUCH AS YOUR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN/PROVIDER, OTHER MEDICAL CONSULTANTS, FAMILY MEMBERS, CLERGY OR OTHERS WE USE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR YOU OR THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR CARE.

PAYMENT
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU SO THAT THE TREATMENT AND SERVICES YOU RECEIVE AT THE OFFICE, HOSPITAL, ENDOSCOPY CENTER, NURSING HOME OR OTHER SITE MAY BE COLLECTED FROM YOU, AN INSURANCE COMPANY OR A THIRD PARTY.
- FOR EXAMPLE, WE MAY NEED TO GIVE YOUR HEALTH PLAN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SERVICES YOU RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE, HOSPITAL OR ENDOSCOPY CENTER, SO THAT YOUR HEALTH PLAN WILL PAY YOU OR REIMBURSE YOU FOR THE SERVICES.
- WE MAY ALSO TELL YOUR HEALTH PLAN ABOUT A TREATMENT YOU ARE GOING TO RECEIVE OR OBTAIN PRIOR APPROVAL OR TO DETERMINE WHETHER YOUR PLAN WILL COVER THE TREATMENT.

HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU FOR OFFICE OPERATIONS. THESE USES AND DISCLOSURES ARE NECESSARY TO OPERATE THE OFFICE AND MAKE SURE THAT ALL OF OUR PATIENTS RECEIVE QUALITY CARE.
- FOR EXAMPLE, WE MAY USE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO REVIEW OUR TREATMENT AND SERVICES AND TO EVALUATE THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR STAFF IN CARING FOR YOU.
- WE MAY ALSO COMBINE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT MANY OF OUR PATIENTS TO DECIDE WHAT ADDITIONAL SERVICES THE OFFICE SHOULD OFFER, WHAT SERVICES ARE NOT NEEDED, AND WHETHER CERTAIN NEW TREATMENTS ARE EFFECTIVE.
- WE MAY ALSO DISCLOSE INFORMATION TO DOCTORS, NURSES, TECHNICIANS, MEDICAL STUDENTS, AND OTHER OFFICE-PERSONNEL FOR REVIEW AND LEARNING PURPOSES.
- WE MAY ALSO COMBINE THE MEDICAL INFORMATION WE HAVE WITH MEDICAL INFORMATION FROM OTHER OFFICES TO COMBINE HOW WE ARE DOING AND SEE WHERE WE CAN MAKE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CARE AND SERVICES THAT WE OFFER.
- WE MAY REMOVE INFORMATION THAT IDENTIFIES YOU FROM THIS SET OF MEDICAL INFORMATION SO OTHERS MAY USE IT TO STUDY HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH CARE DELIVERY WITHOUT LEARNING WHO THE SPECIFIC PATIENTS ARE.

APPOINTMENT REMINDERS
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO CONTACT YOU AS A REMINDER THAT YOU HAVE AN APPOINTMENT FOR TREATMENT OR MEDICAL CARE AT THE ENDOSCOPY CENTER.

TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO TELL YOU ABOUT OR RECOMMEND POSSIBLE TREATMENT OPTIONS OR ALTERNATIVES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU.

HEALTH-RELATED BENEFITS AND SERVICES
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO TELL YOU ABOUT HEALTH-RELATED BENEFITS OR SERVICES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU.

ENDOSCOPY CENTER DIRECTORY
- WE MAY INCLUDE CERTAIN LIMITED INFORMATION ABOUT YOU IN THE ENDOSCOPY CENTER DIRECTORY WHILE YOU ARE A PATIENT AT THE WESTSOUTH ENDOSCOPY CENTER. THIS INFORMATION MAY INCLUDE YOUR NAME, LOCATION IN THE ENDOSCOPY CENTER, AND YOUR GENERAL CONDITION (E.G., FAIR, STABLE, ETC.). THIS IS SO THAT FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN VISIT YOU IN THE ENDOSCOPY CENTER AND GENERALLY KNOW HOW YOU ARE DOING.

INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN YOUR CARE OR PAYMENT FOR YOUR CARE
- WE MAY RELEASE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS INVOLVED IN YOUR MEDICAL CARE.
- WE MAY ALSO GIVE INFORMATION TO SOMEONE WHO HELPS PAY FOR YOUR CARE. WE MAY ALSO TELL YOUR FAMILY OR FRIENDS YOUR CONDITION AND THE TREATMENT YOU ARE RECEIVING.

RESOURCES
- WE MAY ALSO DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO AN ENTITY ASSISTING IN A DISASTER RELIEF EFFORT SO THAT YOUR FAMILY CAN BE NOTIFIED ABOUT YOUR CONDITION, STATUS AND LOCATION.

RESEARCH
- UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.
- FOR EXAMPLE, A RESEARCH PROJECT MAY INVOLVE COMPARING THE HEALTH AND RECOVERY OF ALL PATIENTS WHO RECEIVED ONE MEDICATION TO THOSE WHO RECEIVED ANOTHER, FOR THE SAME CONDITION.
- ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS, HOWEVER, ARE SUBJECT TO A SPECIAL APPROVAL PROCESS.
- THIS PROCESS EVALUATES A PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT AND ITS USE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION, TRYING TO BALANCE THE RESEARCH NEEDS WITH PATIENTS' NEED FOR PRIVACY OF THEIR MEDICAL INFORMATION.
- BEFORE WE USE OR DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH, THE PROJECT WILL HAVE BEEN APPROVED THROUGH THIS RESEARCH APPROVAL PROCESS.
- WE MAY, HOWEVER, DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO PEOPLE PREPARING TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT, FOR EXAMPLE, TO HELP THEM LOOK FOR PATIENTS WITH SPECIFIC MEDICAL NEEDS, SO LONG AS THE MEDICAL INFORMATION THEY REVIEW DOES NOT LEAVE THE OFFICE.
- WE WILL ALMOST ALWAYS ASK FOR YOUR SPECIFIC PERMISSION IF THE RESEARCHER WILL HAVE ACCESS TO YOUR NAME, ADDRESS OR OTHER INFORMATION THAT REVEALS WHO YOU ARE, OR WILL BE INVOLVED IN YOUR CARE AT THE OFFICE.

AS REQUIRED BY LAW
- WE WILL DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU WHEN REQUIRED TO DO SO BY FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL LAW.

TO AVOID A SERIOUS THREAT TO HEALTH OR SAFETY
- WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU WHEN NECESSARY TO PREVENT A SERIOUS THREAT TO YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY OR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC OR ANOTHER PERSON. ANY DISCLOSURE, HOWEVER, WOULD ONLY BE TO SOMEONE ABLE TO HELP PREVENT THE THREAT.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION
- IF YOU ARE AN ORGAN DONOR, WE MAY RELEASE MEDICAL INFORMATION TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT HANDLE ORGAN PROCUREMENT OR ORGAN, EYE OR TISSUE TRANSPANTATION OR AN ORGAN DONATION ORGANIZATION, TO ENABLE AN ORGAN OR TISSUE DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION.

MILITARY AND VETERANS
- IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES, WE MAY RELEASE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AS REQUIRED BY MILITARY COMMAND AUTHORITIES.

PUBLIC HEALTH
- WE MAY ALSO DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES TO CONTROL SICKNESS IN ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL.
- WE MAY DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS UPON YOUR SEPARATION OR DISCHARGE FROM MILITARY SERVICES.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
- WE MAY DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION OR SIMILAR PROGRAMS TO HELP DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.

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To notify 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 medical 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 health care system, governmental programs, and compliance with civil rights laws. 

Law suits and Disputes - If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose medical information about you in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose medical information about you 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. 

Right to Inspect and Copy - You have the right to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes. To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must submit your request in writing to the facility administrator. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a fee as permitted by state law for the cost of copying the records. 

Right to Request an Accounting of Disclosures - You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." This is a list of the disclosures we made of medical information about you. To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the facility administrator. Your request must state a time-period that may not be longer than six years and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list (for example, on paper, electronically). The first list you request within a 12-month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before incurred. 

Right to Request Restrictions - You have the right to request restrictions or limitations on the medical information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the medical information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we only contact you at work or by mail. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to the facility administrator. We will not agree to a request if we believe it would likely violate a law or our professional duties. 

Right to Amend - If you feel that medical information we have about you 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 the office. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the facility administrator. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if we amend that: 

- Was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment; 
- Is not part of the medical information kept by or for the office; 
- Is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or, 
- Is accurate and complete. 

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice - You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may request a paper copy of this notice at any time. 

Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provide us permission to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that permission, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you. 

PARTICIPATION WITH COLORADO REGIONAL HEALTH INTEGRATION ORGANIZATION (CORHI HIE): 

Digestive Health Associates and the Southwest Endoscopy Center endorse, support, and participate in electronic Health Information Exchange (HIE) as a means to improve the quality of your health and healthcare experience. HIE provides us with a way to securely and efficiently share patients’ clinical information with physicians and other healthcare providers that participate in the HIE. Using this technology, we can help our providers to more effectively share information and provide you with better care. The HIE also enables emergency medical personnel and other providers who are treating you to have immediate access to your medical data that may be critical for your care. Making your health information available to your health care providers through the HIE can also help reduce your costs by eliminating unnecessary duplication of tests and procedures. However, you may choose to opt-out of participating in the HIE, or cancel your opt-out choice, at any time.