

USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center

Privacy Protection: Our Commitment to You

At USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center, we recognize the sensitive nature of your personal medical information, and take every precaution to protect your privacy. When you entrust us with this information, you can be certain it will be used only within our strict guidelines.

We've prepared this brochure to explain what types of information we collect, and under what circumstances we may share it.

We hope you will read through all the details of USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center's official position on privacy. Importantly, we want you to understand that the Center uses information responsibly and uses the information in order to:

- ❖ Provide you with the healthcare services you've requested.
- ❖ File your healthcare claim with your insurance company.
- ❖ USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery makes having your procedure at the Center more convenient and efficient for you.

In no case do we provide account or personal medical information to any other companies for the purpose of independent telemarketing or direct mail marketing of any types of products or services.

The Kinds of Information We Collect

When your doctor schedules you for a procedure at USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center, we ask the office to provide us with information in order to accurately file your insurance claim. The following information is requested:

- ❖ Name and address
- ❖ Telephone number, home and work
- ❖ Social Security number
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Birthdate
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Marital Status
- ❖ Guarantor demographic information
- ❖ Insurance carrier name and address
- ❖ Insurance ID and group number
- ❖ Scheduled procedure
- ❖ Patients' history and physical

How We Use This Information

Most of the information we collect is used for only one purpose – to help us deliver the healthcare services you've requested, accurately and efficiently.

Who Has Access to This Information?

Within the Surgical Center:

USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center employees are permitted access to the information they need to perform their jobs on your behalf. We maintain strict internal policies against unauthorized disclosure or use of personal medical information by employees.

Outside service providers:

We have arrangements with companies whose experience is essential for our own services to operate properly. For example, we work with companies that perform pathology, laboratory, pharmacy, management, and medical transcription services. Other companies prepare our financial statements, enable online claims submission, and make banking transactions. These companies provide their services at the direction of USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center and, as permitted by law, we share patient information necessary to perform these functions with them. As with all our business partners, these companies are required to safeguard your information and use it only for authorized purposes. Each of these companies is required to sign an agreement to their confidentiality.

Courts and government bodies:

Certain federal and state laws may require us to share information about you. For example, if you are involved in a legal matter with a third party, we may be ordered to provide information to a court or other party. In these circumstances, only the specific information required by law, subpoena, or court order will be shared. The State of Florida also requires us, by law, to submit personal medical information for their Ambulatory Patient Data Report.

New Patient Rights are on the Way

For the first time ever, the federal government passed comprehensive privacy regulations for health information. This new federal regulation establishes standards for most healthcare providers and payers in the protection of health information and established new patient rights.

The new privacy regulations are part of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) passed by Congress in 1996.

The privacy rules became effective in April 2001, and gave healthcare providers two years to comply.

At USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center, we have always protected our patients' privacy and the new rule amounts to informing our patients about the HIPAA regulations.

What Rights Do Patients Have?

Patients at the Surgical Center have the right to:

Access or inspect their medical record
Obtain a copy of their medical record
Access and copying for as long as information is retained (seven years for adults and seven years after minors become adults)
Request an amendment to their medical record
Receive a notice of Surgery Center privacy practices (this brochure)

Request a list of when and where their confidential information was released within the past six years (may not include information released for care and treatment purposes, for payment, or when used for internal quality assurance purposes)

Request an organization to restrict the use and disclosure of their confidential information (can request restriction in use of information for treatment, payment, or healthcare operation purposes, however, we can choose if we will honor the request) to receive communication by alternative means or locations (such as leaving messages at work instead of at home) File a complaint to the following if you believe your privacy rights were violated:

USF Health Endoscopy and Surgery Center Patient Advocate:

The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services

Tommy G. Thompson
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201
(202) 619-0257
Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775
E-mail: HHS.Mail@hhs.gov

Our Surgical Center is Committed to Protecting Your Privacy

The health information professionals at the Surgery Center have been trained to manage many of the systems required by HIPAA. Professionally, we are bound by a code of ethics to promote and protect the confidentiality and security of your medical records and health information. Our goal is to have patients' trust that their medical records and confidential information will remain private. Our health information professionals are committed to maintaining privacy and quality of care.

**USF Health Endoscopy
and Surgery Center**

Privacy Policy

**Protecting the Confidentiality of Our
Patients' Personal Health Information**