

ALPHARETTA CARDIOLOGY, LLC

5755 North Point Parkway, Suite 270

Alpharetta, GA 30022

Telephone 678-762-0910

Fax 678-762-0920

MARLENE L. BLAISE, M.D., F.A.C.C.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

As required by the privacy regulations created as a result of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU (AS A PATIENT OF THIS PRACTICE) MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO YOUR INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION.

PLEASE REVIEW THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

A. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRIVACY

Our practice is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your individually identifiable health information (PHI). In conducting our business, we will create records regarding you and the treatment and services we provide to you. We are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of health information that identifies you; examples include (but are not limited to):

- Date of Birth
- Sex / Gender
- Home Address
- Government Issued I.D.

In addition, we are required by law to provide you with this notice of our legal duties and the privacy practices that we maintain in our practice concerning your PHI. By federal and state law, we must follow the terms of the notice of privacy practices that we have in effect at the time.

We realize that these laws are complicated, but we must provide you with the following important information:

- How we may use and disclose your PHI
- Your privacy rights in your PHI
- Our obligations concerning the use and disclosure of your PHI

The terms of this notice apply to all records containing your PHI that are created or retained by our practice. We reserve the right to revise or amend this Notice of Privacy Practices. Any revision or amendment to this notice will be effective for all your records that our practice has created or maintained in the past, and for any of your records that we may create or maintain in the future. You may request a copy of our privacy notice at any time. We have a copy of it in our office, and we have it available online in the Patient Center section of our website: <https://www.alpharettacardiology.com>

B. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS NOTICE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC
5755 North Point Parkway, Suite 270
Alpharetta, GA 30022
678-762-0910

C. WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION (PHI) IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

The following categories describe the different ways we may use and disclose your PHI.

- 1. Treatment.** Our practice may use your PHI to treat you. For example, we may ask you to have laboratory tests (such as blood or urine tests), and we may use the results to help us reach a diagnosis. We might use your PHI in order to write a prescription for you, or we might disclose your PHI to a pharmacy when we order a prescription for you. Many of the people who work for our practice – including, but not limited to, our doctors and nurses – may use or disclose your PHI in order to treat you or to assist others in your treatment. Additionally, we may disclose your PHI to others who may assist in your care, such as your spouse, children, or parents. Finally, we may also disclose your PHI to other health care providers for purposes related to your treatment.
- 2. Payment.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services and items you may receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer to certify that you are eligible for benefits (and for what range of benefits), and we may provide your insurer with details regarding your treatment to determine if your insurer will cover or pay for your treatment. We may use and disclose your PHI to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for such costs, such as family members. Also, we may use your PHI to bill you directly for services and items. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers and entities to assist in their billing and collection efforts.
- 3. Health Care Operations.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to operate our business. For example, our practice may use your PHI to evaluate the quality of care you received from us, or to conduct cost-management and business planning activities for our practice. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers and entities to assist in their health care operations.
- 4. Appointment Reminders.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to contact you and remind you of an appointment.
- 5. Treatment Options.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to other providers who may become involved in your care.
- 6. Health-Related Benefits and Services.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to other providers who may be involved with your health benefits.
- 7. Release of Information to Family/Friends.** Our practice may release your PHI to a friend or family member of your choosing who is involved in your care.
- 8. Disclosures Required by Law.** Our practice will use and disclose your PHI when we are required to do so by federal, state, or local law. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Disability claims
- Matters related to law enforcement
- Instances when insurance companies request additional information before agreeing to make a payment
- Occasions when medical examiners request information for a patient who has passed away

D. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF YOUR PHI IN CERTAIN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The following categories describe unique scenarios in which we may use or disclose your identifiable health information:

- 1. Public Health Risks.** Our practice may disclose your PHI to public health authorities that are authorized by law to collect information for the purpose of:

 - Maintaining vital records, such as births and deaths
 - Reporting child abuse or neglect
 - Preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability
 - Notifying a person regarding potential exposure to a communicable disease
 - Notifying a person regarding a potential risk for spreading or contracting a disease or condition
 - Reporting reactions to drugs or problems with products or devices
 - Notifying individuals if a product or device they may be using has been recalled
 - Notifying appropriate government agencies and authorities regarding the potential abuse or neglect of an adult patient (including domestic violence); however, we will only disclose this information if the patient agrees, or we are required or authorized by law to disclose this information
 - Notifying your employer under limited circumstances related primarily to workplace injury, illness, or medical surveillance
- 2. Health Oversight Activities.** Our practice may disclose your PHI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. Oversight activities can include investigations, inspections, audits, surveys, licensure, and disciplinary actions; civil, administrative, and criminal procedures or actions; or other activities necessary for the government to monitor government programs, compliance with civil rights laws and the health care system in general.
- 3. Lawsuits and Similar Proceedings.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI in response to a court or administrative order if you are involved in a lawsuit or similar proceeding. We also may disclose your PHI in response to a discovery request, subpoena, or other lawful process by another party involved in the dispute, but only if we have made an effort to inform you of the request or to obtain an order protecting the information the party has requested.
- 4. Law Enforcement.** We may release PHI if asked to do so by a law enforcement official:

 - Regarding a crime victim in certain situations, if we are unable to obtain the person's agreement
 - Concerning a death, we believe has resulted from criminal conduct
 - Regarding criminal conduct at our offices
 - In response to a warrant, summons, court order, subpoena, or similar legal process
 - To identify/locate a suspect, material witness, fugitive, or missing person
 - In an emergency, to report a crime (including the location or victim(s) of the crime, or the description, identity, or location of the perpetrator)

- 5. Deceased Patients.** Our practice may release PHI to a medical examiner or coroner to identify a deceased individual or to identify the cause of death. If necessary, we also may release information in order for funeral directors to perform their jobs.
- 6. Organ and Tissue Donation.** Our practice may release your PHI to organizations that handle organ, eye or tissue procurement, or transplantation; including organ donation banks in order to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation if you are an organ donor.
- 7. Research.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI for research purposes in certain limited circumstances. We will obtain your written authorization to use your PHI for research purposes except when The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has determined that the waiver of your authorization satisfies the following: (i) the use or disclosure involves no more than a minimal risk to the individual's privacy based on the following: (a) an adequate plan to protect the identifiers from improper use and disclosure; (b) an adequate plan to destroy the identifiers at the earliest opportunity consistent with the research (unless there is a health or research justification for retaining the identifiers or such retention is otherwise required by law); and (c) adequate written assurances that the PHI will not be re-used or disclosed to any other person or entity (except as required by law) for authorized oversight of the research study, or for other research for which the use or disclosure would otherwise be permitted; (ii) the research could not practicably be conducted without the waiver; and (iii) the research could not practicably be conducted without access to and use of the PHI.
- 8. Serious Threats to Health or Safety.** Our practice may use and disclose your PHI when necessary to reduce or prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of another individual or the public. Under these circumstances, we will only make disclosures to a person or organization able to help prevent the threat.
- 9. Military.** Our practice may disclose your PHI if you are a member of U.S. or foreign military forces (including veterans) and if required by the appropriate authorities.
- 10. National Security.** Our practice may disclose your PHI to federal officials for intelligence and national security activities authorized by law. We also may disclose your PHI to federal officials in order to protect the President, other officials, or foreign heads of state, or to conduct investigations.
- 11. Inmates.** Our practice may disclose your PHI to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials if you are an inmate or under the custody of a law enforcement official. Disclosure for these purposes would be necessary: (a) for the institution to provide health care services to you, (b) for the safety and security of the institution, and/or (c) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of other individuals.
- 12. Workers' Compensation.** Our practice may release your PHI for workers' compensation and similar programs.

E. YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR PHI

You have the following rights regarding the PHI that we maintain about you:

- 1. Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that our practice communicate with you about your health and related issues in a particular manner or at a certain location. For instance, you may ask that we contact you at home, rather than at work. In order to request a type of confidential communication, you must make a written request to **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC** specifying the requested method of contact, or the location where you wish to be contacted. Our practice will accommodate **reasonable** requests. You do not need to give a reason for your request.
- 2. Requesting Restrictions.** You have the right to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations. Additionally, you have the right to request that we restrict our disclosure of your PHI to only certain individuals involved in your care or the payment for your care, such as family members and friends. **We are not required to agree to your request**; however, if we do agree, we are bound by our agreement except when otherwise required by law, in emergencies, or when the information is necessary to treat you. In order to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your PHI, you must make your request in writing to **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**. Your request must describe in a clear and concise fashion:

 - The information you wish restricted.
 - Whether or not you are requesting to limit our practice’s use, disclosure, or both
 - To whom you want the limits to apply.
- 3. Inspection and Copies.** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the PHI that may be used to make decisions about you, including patient medical records and billing records. You must submit your request in writing to **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC** in order to inspect and/or obtain a copy of your PHI. Our practice may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing, labor, and supplies associated with your request.
- 4. Amendment.** You may ask us to amend your health information if you believe it is incorrect or incomplete, and your amendment request be submitted within 30 days of your office visit. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**. You must provide us with a reason that supports your request for amendment. Our practice will deny your request if you fail to submit your request (and the reason supporting your request) in writing. Also, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that is in our opinion:

 - Accurate and complete
 - Not part of the PHI kept by or for the practice
 - Not part of the PHI which you would be permitted to inspect and copy
 - Not created by our practice, unless the individual or entity that created the information is not available to amend the information.
- 5. Accounting of Disclosures.** All of our patients have the right to request an “accounting of disclosures.” An “accounting of disclosures” is a list of certain non-routine disclosures our practice has made of your PHI for non-treatment or operations purposes. Use of your PHI as part of the routine patient care in our practice is not required to be documented. For example, the doctor shares information with the nurse; or the billing department using your information to file your insurance claim. In order to obtain an accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**.
- 6. Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice.** You are entitled to receive a paper copy of our notice of privacy practices. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. To obtain a paper copy of this notice, contact **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**.

- 7. Right to File a Complaint.** If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our practice or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with our practice, contact **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**. All complaints must be submitted in writing. **You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.**

- 8. Right to Provide an Authorization for Other Uses and Disclosures.** Our practice will obtain your written authorization for uses and disclosures that are not identified by this notice or permitted by applicable law. Any authorization you provide to us regarding the use and disclosure of your PHI may be revoked at any time in writing. After you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose your PHI for the reasons described in the authorization. Please note, we are required to retain records of your care.

Again, if you have any questions regarding this notice or our health information privacy policies, please contact **Alpharetta Cardiology, LLC**