



Effective Date: September 7, 2004

**NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES FOR
SPECIALTY SURGICAL CENTER, L.L.C.
AND
ALL PHYSICIANS AND ANESTHESIOLOGISTS PROVIDING SERVICES AT THIS CENTER**

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED
AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN ACCESS THIS INFORMATION.**

PLEASE REVIEW THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Privacy Officer of Specialty Surgical Center, L.L.C. ("SSC") via phone: 310-659-6333 x3311, fax: 310-388-1554 or mail: 8670 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE

This notice describes the information privacy practices followed by SSC employees, staff and other affiliated professionals, including the physicians and anesthesiologists that provide services at this center (collectively defined as "SSC"). For this Notice of Privacy Practices, the physicians and anesthesiologists will only be covered in relation to their services provided at this facility.

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

This notice applies to the information and records SSC maintains regarding your health, health status, and the health care and services you receive at this facility.

SSC is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information and to give you this notice. This notice documents the manner in which SSC may use and disclose health information about you and describes your rights and SSC's obligations regarding the use and disclosure of that information.

HOW SSC MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

For Treatment

SSC may use health information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. SSC may disclose health information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, office staff or other personnel who are involved in taking care of you and your health.

For example, your doctor may be treating you for a sinus condition and may need to know if you have other health problems that could complicate your treatment. The doctor may use your medical history to decide what treatment is best for you. The doctor may also consult another doctor about your condition, so that doctor can assist in determining the most appropriate care for you.

Different personnel at SSC may share information about you and disclose information to people who do not work in this facility in order to coordinate your care, such as speaking with your health care provider's office, ordering specialized supplies and/or implants and scheduling lab work. Family members and health care providers may be part of your medical care outside this facility and may require your health information as documented by SSC.



For Payment

SSC may use and disclose health information about you, so that the treatment and services you receive at this facility may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. For example, SSC may need to give your health plan information about a service you received here, so your health plan will pay SSC or reimburse you for the service. SSC may also tell your health plan about a treatment you are going to receive to obtain prior approval, or to determine whether your plan will cover the treatment.

For Health Care Operations

SSC may use and disclose health information about you in order to run this facility and make sure that you and other patients receive quality care. For example, SSC may use your health information to evaluate the performance of SSC's staff in caring for you. SSC may also use health information about all or many of our patients to help SSC decide what additional services SSC should offer, how SSC can become more efficient, or whether certain new treatments are effective.

Appointment Reminders

SSC may contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment or medical care at this facility. In certain circumstances, an SSC representative may leave a message for a patient on a voice mail or answering machine. SSC will take care to limit the amount of information disclosed to that necessary to confirm your appointment. Please notify SSC if you do not wish to be contacted for appointment reminders.

Health-Related Products and Services

SSC may tell you about health-related products or services that we offer which may be of interest to you.

To the extent that SSC is aware of health-related products or services offered by other providers that may be of interest to you, SSC will obtain your written *Authorization* permitting SSC to disclose information about you, so you may receive such communications.

Please notify SSC if you do not wish to be contacted about these products or services, or if you do not wish to receive communications about treatment alternatives or health-related products and services. If you advise the Privacy Officer in writing (at the address listed at the top of this Notice) that you do not wish to receive such communications, SSC will not use or disclose your information for these purposes.

You may revoke your *Authorization* at any time by giving SSC written notice. Your revocation will be effective when SSC receives it, but it will not apply to any uses and disclosures which occurred before that time.

If you do revoke your *Authorization*, SSC will not be permitted to use or disclose information for purposes of treatment, payment or health care operations, and SSC may therefore choose to discontinue providing to you health care treatment and services.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

SSC may use or disclose health information about you without your permission for the following purposes, subject to all applicable legal requirements and limitations.

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety

SSC may use and disclose health 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.



Required By Law

SSC will disclose health information about you when required to do so by federal, state or local law. In situations where federal, state or local law do not agree, the more stringent law will apply.

Research

SSC may use and disclose health information about you for research projects that are subject to a special approval process. SSC will ask you for your 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 this facility.

Military, Veterans, National Security and Intelligence

If you are or were a member of the armed forces, or part of the national security or intelligence communities, SSC may be required by military command or other government authorities to release health information about you. SSC may also release information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

Workers' Compensation

SSC may release health information about you for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

Public Health Risks

SSC may disclose health information about you for public health reasons in order to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; or report births, deaths, suspected abuse or neglect, non-accidental physical injuries, reactions to medications or problems with products.

Health Oversight Activities

SSC may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for audits, investigations, inspections, or licensing purposes. These disclosures may be necessary for certain state and federal agencies to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits and Disputes

If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, SSC may disclose health information about you in response to a court or administrative order. Subject to all applicable legal requirements, SSC may also disclose health information about you in response to a subpoena.

Law Enforcement

SSC may release health information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official if you are or are suspected to be a victim of a crime or in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process, subject to all applicable legal requirements.

Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors

SSC may release health information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death.



Information Not Personally Identifiable

SSC may use or disclose health information about you in a way that does not personally identify you or reveal who you are.

Family and Friends

SSC may disclose health information about you to your family members or friends if SSC obtains your verbal agreement to do so, or if SSC gives you an opportunity to object to such a disclosure and you do not raise an objection. SSC may also disclose health information to your family or friends if SSC can infer from the circumstances, based on our professional judgment that you would not object. For example, SSC may assume you agree to our disclosure of your personal health information to your spouse when you bring your spouse with you into the pre-operative room or recovery room while treatment is discussed or following treatment .

In situations where you are not capable of giving consent (because you are not present or due to your incapacity or medical emergency), SSC may, using our professional judgment, determine that a disclosure to your family member or friend is in your best interest. In that situation, SSC will disclose only limited health information relevant to the person's involvement in your care. For example, SSC may inform the person who accompanied you to the facility that you suffered a complication and provide updates on your progress and prognosis. SSC may also use professional judgment and experience to make reasonable inferences that it is in your best interest to allow another person to act on your behalf to pick up, for example, filled prescriptions, medical supplies, or x-rays.

OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

SSC will not use or disclose your health information for any purpose other than those identified in the previous sections without your specific, written *Authorization*. SSC must obtain your *Authorization* separate from any *Consent* SSC may have obtained from you. If you give SSC *Authorization* to use or disclose health information about you, you may revoke that *Authorization*, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your *Authorization*, SSC will no longer use or disclose information about you for the reasons covered by your written *Authorization*, but SSC cannot take back any uses or disclosures already made with your permission.

If SSC has HIV or substance abuse information about you, SSC cannot release that information without a special signed, written authorization (different than the *Authorization* and *Consent* mentioned above) from you. In order to disclose these types of records for purposes of treatment, payment or health care operations, SSC will have to have both your signed *Consent* and a special written *Authorization* that complies with the law governing HIV or substance abuse records.

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

You have the following rights regarding health information SSC maintains about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy

You have the right to inspect and copy your health information, such as medical and billing records, that SSC uses to make decisions about your care. You must submit a written request to the Privacy Officer in order to inspect and/or copy your health information. If you request a copy of the information, SSC may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other associated supplies. SSC may deny your request to inspect and/or copy in certain limited circumstances. If you are denied access to your health information, you may ask that the denial be reviewed. If such a review is required by law, SSC will select a licensed health care professional to review your request and our denial. The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request, and SSC will comply with the outcome of the review.



Right to Amend

If you believe health information SSC has about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask SSC to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment as long as the information is kept by this facility.

To request an amendment, complete and submit a *Medical Record Amendment/Correction Form* to the Privacy Officer. SSC 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, SSC may deny your request if you ask SSC to amend information that:

- a) SSC did not create, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment.
- b) Is not part of the health information that SSC keeps.
- c) You would not be permitted to inspect and copy.
- d) Is accurate and complete.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures

You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." This is a list of the disclosures SSC made of medical information about you for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations. To obtain this list, you must submit your request in writing to the Privacy Officer. It must state a time period, which 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 or electronically). SSC may charge you for the costs of providing the list. SSC will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

Right to Request Restrictions

You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information SSC uses or discloses about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information SSC discloses about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for it, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that SSC not use or disclose information about a surgery you had.

SSC is Not Required to Agree to Your Request

If SSC does agree with your request to restrict information, SSC will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment.

To request restrictions, you may complete and submit a *Request For Restricting Uses and Disclosures and Confidential Communications Form* to the Privacy Officer.

Right to Request Confidential Communications

You have the right to request that SSC communicates with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that SSC only contact you at work or by mail.

To request confidential communications, you may complete and submit *the Request For Restricting Uses and Disclosures and Confidential Communications Form* to the Privacy Officer. SSC will not ask you the reason for your request. SSC will accommodate all reasonable requests. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted.



Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice

You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask SSC to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive it electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy. To obtain such a copy, contact the Privacy Officer.

USE OF RECORDING SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS FOR SECURITY PURPOSES

SSC uses and/or intends to use recording surveillance cameras in this center for security purposes. Any image of patients captured from such cameras will be incidental to the intended purposes of such security. Further, under no circumstances will any images from such cameras be shared with any third parties, except as required by law.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

SSC reserves the right to change this notice, and to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information SSC already has about you as well as any information SSC receives in the future. SSC will post a summary of the current notice in the office with its effective date in the top right hand corner of the first page. You are entitled to a copy of the notice currently in effect.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with this facility or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with this facility, contact the Privacy Officer. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

Specialty Surgical Center
Attn: Privacy Officer
8670 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Phone: (310) 659-6333 x3311
Fax: 310-388-1554

Region IX, Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
50 United Nations Plaza -- Room 322
San Francisco, CA 94102
Voice Phone: (415) 437-8310
Fax: (415) 437-8329
TDD: (415) 437-8311