



YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVACY RIGHTS (HIPPA)

This law, called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA), gives you rights over your health information, including the right to get a copy of your information, make sure it is correct and know who has seen it.

Get it.

You can ask to see or get a copy of your medical record and other health information at any time. If you want a copy, you may have to put your request in writing and pay for the cost of copying and mailing. In most cases your copies must be given to you in 30 days.

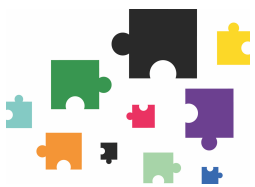
Check it.

You can ask to change any wrong information in your file if you think something is missing or incomplete. You have the right to have your disagreement noted in your file. In most cases, the files should be updated within 60 days.

Know Who Has Seen It.

By law, your health information can be used and shared for specific reasons not directly related to you care.

- Learn how your health information is used and shared by your doctor or health insurer.
- Let your providers or health insurance companies know if there is information you do not want to share. You can ask that your health information not be shared with certain people, groups, or companies. They do not always have to agree to do what you ask, particularly if it could affect your care.
- Ask to be reached somewhere other than home.





PRIVACY, SECURITY, AND ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

EHRs are electronic versions of the paper charts in your doctor’s or other health care provider’s office. An EHR may include your medical history notes, and other information about your health including symptoms, diagnosis, medications, lab results, vital signs, immunizations, and reports from diagnostic tests such as xrays.

Providers are working with other doctors, hospitals, and health plans to find ways to share that information. The information in EHRs can be shared with other organizations involved in your care if the computer systems are set up to talk to each other. Information in these records should only be shared for purposes authorized by law or by you.

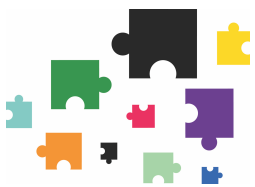
You have privacy rights whether your information is stored as a paper record or stored in electronic form. The same federal laws that already protect your health information also apply to information in EHRs.

Keeping your Electronic Health Information Secure

Most of us feel that our health information is private and should be protected. The federal government put in place the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Privacy Rule to ensure you have rights over your own health information, no matter what form it is in. The government also created HIPPA Security Rule to require specific protections to safeguard your electronic health information. A few possible measures that can be built in to EHR systems may include:

- “Access control tools” like passwords and PIN numbers, to help limit access to your information to authorized individuals.
- “Encrypting your stored information. That means your health information cannot be read or understood except by those using a system that can “decrypt” it with a “key.”
- An “audit trail” feature, which records who accessed your information, what changes were made and when.

Finally, federal law requires doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers to notify you of a “breach.” The law also requires the health care provider to notify the Secretary of Health and Human Services. If a breach affects more than 500 residents of a state or jurisdiction, the health care provider must also notify prominent media outlets serving the state or jurisdiction. This





requirement helps patients know if something has gone wrong with the protection of their information and helps keep providers accountable for EHR protection.

SHARING HEALTH INFORMATION WITH FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

There is a federal law, called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), that sets rules for health care providers and health plans about who can look at and receive your health information, including those closest to you – your family members and friends. The HIPAA Privacy Rule ensures that you have rights over your health information, including the right to get your information, make sure it's correct, and know who has seen it.

What Happens if You Want to Share Health Information with a Family Member or a Friend?

HIPPA requires most doctors, nurses, hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care providers to protect the privacy of your health information. However, if you don't object, a health care provider or health plan may share relevant information with family members or friends involved in your health care or payment for your health care in certain circumstances.

When Your Health Information Can Be Shared

- Under HIPPA, your health care provider may share your information face-to-face, over the phone, or in writing. A health care provider or health plan may share relevant information if:
- You give your provider or plan permission to share the information.
- you give your provider permission to share the information.
- You are not present and do not object to sharing the information.
- You are not present, and the provider determines based on professional judgment that it's in your best interest.

To learn more, visit www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/

