

**WEST SHORE CARDIOLOGY**  
**NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

**Effective Date: 04/14/03**

As Required by the Privacy Regulations Created as a Result of the  
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

**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**

West Shore Cardiology is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your individually identifiable health information (IIHI). 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. We also are required by law to provide you with this notice of our legal duties and the privacy practices that West Shore Cardiology maintains concerning you IIHI. 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 IIHI
- Your privacy rights in your IIHI
- Our obligations concerning the use and disclosure of your IIHI

**The terms of this notice apply to all records containing your IIHI that are created or retained by West Shore Cardiology. 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 of your records that West Shore Cardiology has created or maintained in the past, and for any of your records that we may create or maintain in the future. West Shore Cardiology will post a copy of our current Notice in our offices in a visible location at all times, and you may request a copy of our most current Notice at any time.**

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

Brenda Hopma, Administrator  
West Shore Cardiology  
1212 E. Sherman Blvd.  
Muskegon, MI 49444  
(231) 739-9427

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

The following categories describe the different ways in which we may use and disclose your IIHI.

- 1. Treatment.** West Shore Cardiology may use your IIHI 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 IIHI in order to write a prescription for you, or we might disclose your IIHI to a pharmacy when we order a prescription for you. Many of the people who work for West Shore Cardiology – including, but not limited to, our doctors and nurses – may use or disclose your IIHI in order to treat you or to assist others in your treatment. Additionally, we may disclose your IIHI to others who may assist in your care, such as your spouse, children or parents.
- 2. Payment.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI 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 also may use and disclose your IIHI to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for such costs, such as family members. Also, we may use your IIHI to bill you directly for services and items.
- 3. Health Care Operations.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI to operate our business. As examples of the ways in which we may use and disclose your information for our operations, our practice may use your IIHI to evaluate the quality of care you received from us, or to conduct cost-management and business planning activities for West Shore Cardiology.
- 4. Appointment Reminders.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI to contact you and remind you of an appointment.
- 5. Treatment Options.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI to inform you of potential treatment options or alternatives.
- 6. Health-Related Benefits and Services.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI to inform you of health-related benefits or services that may be of interest to you.

7. **Release of information to Family/Friends.** West Shore Cardiology may release your IIHI to a friend or family member that is involved in your care, or who assists in taking care of you. For example, a parent or guardian may ask that a babysitter take their child to the pediatrician's office for treatment of a cold. In this example, the babysitter may have access to this child's medical information.
8. **Disclosure Required By Law.** West Shore Cardiology will use and disclose your IIHI when we are required to do so by federal, state or local law.

#### **D. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF YOUR IIHI 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.** West Shore Cardiology may disclose your IIHI 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 agency(ies) and authority(ies) 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 or illness or medical surveillance.
2. **Health Oversight Activities.** West Shore Cardiology may disclose your IIHI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. Oversight activities can include, for example, 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.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IIHI in response to court or administrative order, if you are involved in a lawsuit or similar proceeding. We also may disclose your IIHI 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 IHII 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.** West Shore Cardiology may release IHII to a medical examiner or coroner to identify a deceased individual or to identify the cause of death. If necessary we may also release information in order for funeral directors to perform their jobs.
6. **Organ and Tissue Donation.** West Shore Cardiology may release your IHII to organizations that handle organ, eye or tissue procurement or transplantation, including organ donation banks, as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation if you are an organ donor.
7. **Research.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IHII for research purposes in certain limited circumstances. We will obtain your written authorization to use your IHII for research purposes except when: (a) our use or disclosure was approved by an Institutional Review Board or a Privacy Board; (b) we obtain the oral or written agreement of a researcher that (i) the information being sought is necessary for the research study; (ii) the researcher will not remove any of your IHII from West Shore Cardiology; or (c) the IHII sought by the researcher only relates to decedents and the researcher agrees either orally or in writing that the use or disclosure is necessary for the research and, if we request it, to provide us with proof of death prior to access to the IHII of the decedents.
8. **Serious Threats to Health or Safety.** West Shore Cardiology may use and disclose your IHII 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.** West Shore Cardiology may disclose your IHII if you are a member of U.S. or foreign military forces (including veterans) and if required by the appropriate authorities.
10. **National Security.** West Shore Cardiology may disclose your IHII to federal officials for intelligence and national security activities authorized by law. We also may disclose your IHII to federal officials in order to protect the President, other officials or foreign heads of state, or to conduct investigations.

11. **Inmates.** West Shore Cardiology may disclose your IIHI 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.** West Shore Cardiology may release your IIHI for workers' compensation and similar programs.

#### E. YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR IIHI

You have the following rights regarding the IIHI that we maintain about you.

1. **Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that West Shore Cardiology 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 work. In order to request a type of confidential communication, you must make a written request to **Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427**, specifying the requested method of contact, or the location where you wish to be contacted. West Shore Cardiology 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 IIHI for treatment, payment or health care operations. Additionally, you have the right to request that we restrict our disclosure of your IIHI 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 IIHI, you must make your request in writing to **Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427**. Your request must describe in a clear and concise fashion:
  - (a) the information you wish restricted;
  - (b) whether you are requesting to limit West Shore Cardiology's use, disclosure or both; and
  - (c) to whom you want the limits to apply.
3. **Inspection and Copies.** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the IIHI that may be used to make decisions about you, including patient medical records and billing records, but not including psychotherapy notes. You must submit your request in writing to **Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427**, in order to inspect and/or obtain a copy of your IIHI. West Shore Cardiology may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing, labor and supplies associated with your request. West Shore Cardiology may deny your request to inspect and/or copy in certain limited circumstances; however, you may request a review of our denial. Another licensed health care professional chosen by us will conduct reviews.

- 4. Amendment.** You may ask us to amend your health information if you believe it is incorrect or incomplete, and you may request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for West Shore Cardiology. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to ***Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427***. 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: (a) accurate and complete; (b) not part of the IIHI kept by or for the practice; (c) not part of the IIHI which you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or (d) not created by West Shore Cardiology, 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 West Shore Cardiology has made of your IIHI for non-treatment or operations purposes. Use of your IIHI as part of the routine patient care in our practice is not required to be documented. For example, the doctor sharing 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 ***Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427***. All requests for an “accounting of disclosures” must state a time period, which may not be longer than six (6) years from the date of disclosure and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. The first list you request within a 12-month period is free of charge, but West Shore Cardiology may charge you for additional lists within the same 12-month period. West Shore Cardiology will notify you of the costs involved with additional requests, and you may withdraw your request before you incur any costs.
- 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 ***Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427***.
- 7. Right to File a Complaint.** If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with West Shore Cardiology or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with West Shore Cardiology contact ***Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427***. 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.** West Shore Cardiology 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 IIHI may be revoked at any time in writing. After you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose your IIHI for the reasons described in the authorization. Please note, we are required to retain records of our care.

Again, if you have any questions regarding this notice or our health information privacy policies, please contact ***Brenda Hopma, Administrator, at 231-739-9427***.