

Notification for release of information via email

Email communication provides for a fast and easy way to communicate with your healthcare provider for those issues that are non-emergent, non-urgent, or non-critical. It is not a replacement for the interpersonal contact that is the very basis of the patient-healthcare provider relationship; instead, it can support and strengthen an already established relationship.

The following summarizes the information you need to determine whether you wish to supplement your healthcare experience with our medical group by electronically communicating with staff members.

General Considerations

- Email communication will be considered and treated with the same degree of privacy and confidentiality as written medical records.
- Standard email services, such as Gmail, AOL, Yahoo, and HotMail, are not secure. This means that email messages are not encrypted and can be intercepted and read by unauthorized individuals.
- Transmitting email that contains protected health information through an email system that is not encrypted does not meet the security guidelines as required by the Health Information Protection and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Your Email address will not be used for external marketing purposes without your permission. You may receive a group mailing from the medical group.
- Electronic communication is a privilege that may be withdrawn at the discretion of this medical practice.
- Electronic communication is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed hard copies. In addition, it is impossible to verify the true identity of the sender or to ensure that only the recipient can read the electronic communication once it has been sent.
- Electronic communication can introduce viruses into a computer system and potentially damage or disrupt the computer.
- Electronic communication can be forwarded, intercepted, circulated, stored, or even changed without the knowledge or permission of the physician or patient. Electronic communication senders can easily misaddress an email, resulting in it being sent to many unintended and unknown recipients. Electronic communication is indelible. Even after the sender and recipient have deleted their copies of the email, backup copies may exist on a computer or cyberspace. •
- The use of electronic communication to discuss sensitive information can increase the risk of such information being disclosed to third parties.
- I will notify the Carson Tahoe Health of any changes to my electronic communication address

CTH Responsibilities

- Your provider may route your email messages to other members of the medical group for informational purposes or for expediting a response.
- Designated staff may receive and read your email.
- The medical group will make every attempt to respond to your email message within two business days. If you do not receive a response from the medical group within two business days, please contact the office.
- You are advised to retain all electronic correspondence for your files.

Patient Responsibilities

- Email messages should not be used for emergencies or time-sensitive situations. In the event of a medical emergency, you should contact 911. For emergent or time-sensitive situations, you should contact your
- healthcare provider through the office.
- Email messages should be concise. Please arrange for an office appointment if the issue is too complex or

sensitive to discuss via email.

- Please key in your full name and the topic, i.e., medication question, in the subject line. This will serve to identify you as the sender of the email.
- Please acknowledge that you received and read the message by return email to the provider.
- I will not send pictures via electronic communication unless I have been asked by my physician to do so.
- I will not add CTH electronic communication address to any group mailing list.
- I will not use email for any of the following:
 - As a substitute for an appointment with your health care provider.
 - Requesting a diagnosis based on a written description of symptoms.
 - Any frivolous, commercial, or unapproved purpose.