

HOLISTIC ORTHOPEDICS

E-mail Disclosure & Conditions of Use

Holistic Orthopedics offers patients the opportunity to communicate by e-mail. Transmitting patient information poses several risks of which the patient should be aware. The patient should not agree to communicate with Holistic Orthopedics via e-mail without understanding and accepting these risks. The risks include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The privacy and security of e-mail communication cannot be guaranteed.
- Online services and your employer may have a legal right to inspect and keep e-mails that pass through their system.
- E-mail is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed hard copies. In addition, it is difficult to verify the true identity of the sender, and to ensure that only the recipient can read the e-mail once it has been sent.
- E-mails can introduce viruses into a computer system, and potentially damage or disrupt the computer.
- E-mail can be forwarded, intercepted, circulated, stored or even changed without the knowledge or permission of Holistic Orthopedics or the patient. E-mail senders can easily misaddress an e-mail, resulting in it being possibly sent to many unintended and unknown recipients.
- E-mail is indelible. Even after the sender and recipient have deleted their copies of the e-mail, back-up copies may exist on a computer or in cyberspace.
- Use of e-mail to discuss sensitive information can increase the risk of such information being disclosed to third parties.
- E-mail can be used as evidence in court.

Conditions of using e-mail

Holistic Orthopedics does not use encryption software, but will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of e-mail information sent and received. However, because of the risks outlined above, Holistic Orthopedics cannot guarantee the security and confidentiality of e-mail communications. Thus, patients choosing to communicate with Holistic Orthopedics via e-mail, must consent to the use of e-mail communication with our clinic. Holistic Orthopedics has the right to, upon the provision of written notice, withdraw the option of communicating through e-mail.

- E-mails to or from the patient concerning diagnosis or treatment may be printed in full and made part of the patient's medical record. Because they are part of the medical record, other individuals authorized to access the medical record, such as staff and billing personnel, will have access to those e-mails. Holistic Orthopedics may forward e-mails internally to the Holistic Orthopedics's staff and to those involved, as necessary, for diagnosis, treatment, reimbursement, healthcare operations, and other handling. Holistic Orthopedics will not, however, forward e-mails to independent third parties without the patient's prior written consent, except as authorized or required by law. E-mail communication is not an appropriate substitute for clinical examinations. The patient is responsible for following up on e-mail sent to Holistic Orthopedics and for scheduling appointments where warranted.
- *If the patient's e-mail requires or invites a response from Holistic Orthopedics* and the patient has not received a response within a reasonable time period, it is the patient's responsibility to follow up to determine whether the intended recipient received the e-mail and when the recipient will respond.
- The patient should not use e-mail for communication regarding sensitive medical information, such as sexually transmitted disease, AIDS/HIV, mental health, developmental disability, or substance abused. Similarly, Holistic Orthopedics will not discuss such matters over e-mail.
- **The patient is responsible for informing Holistic Orthopedics of any types of information the patient does not want to be sent by e-mail**, in addition to those set out in the bullets above. The patient can add to or modify this list at any time by notifying Holistic Orthopedics in writing.
- Holistic Orthopedics is not responsible for information loss due to technical failures associated with the patient's e-mail software or Internet provider.

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Turn over

To communicate by e-mail, the patient shall:

- Limit or avoid using an employer's or other third party's computer.
- Inform Holistic Orthopedics of any changes in the patient's e-mail address.
- Include in the e-mail: the category of the communication in the e-mail's subject line, for routing purposes (e.g., 'appointment request'); and the name of the patient in the body of the e-mail.
- Review the e-mail to ensure clarity and that all relevant information is provided before sending to Holistic Orthopedics.
- Inform Holistic Orthopedics when the patient receives an e-mail from the staff of Holistic Orthopedics.
- Take precautions to preserve the confidentiality of e-mails, such as using screen savers and safeguarding computer passwords.
- Withdraw consent only by e-mail or written communication to Holistic Orthopedics.
- **Should the patient require immediate assistance, or if the patient's condition appears serious or rapidly worsens, the patient should not rely on e-mail.** Rather, the patient should call Holistic Orthopedics's office for consultation or an appointment, or take other measures as appropriate.

Although Holistic Orthopedics will endeavor to read and respond promptly to an e-mail from the patient, **Holistic Orthopedics cannot guarantee that any particular e-mail will be read and responded to within any particular period of time.** Thus, the patient should not use e-mail for medical emergencies or other time-sensitive matters.

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