

How to Get a Copy of Your Health Records

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October, 2008

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Request for a Copy of Medical Records (form)

Read the following about authorizations!

Authorization for Disclosure of Health Information (form)

How to Get a Copy of Your Medical/Health Records

1. Definitions

For purposes of this document, the term “Medical Records” refers to all of your health records, including medical, dental, chiropractic, pharmaceutical, psychiatric, psychological, and all of the various specialties (dermatology, surgery, any and all procedures, lab tests, radiology results, etc.).

The term “provider” refers to any licensed healthcare provider, such as an MD, DO, DDS, DC, medical technician, PhD (for example, psychologist), etc. In some states, a provider is also defined as an RN, Nurse Practitioner, and LVN.

2. What is a medical record?

A medical record is a document in which your provider records all relevant information about your health when you are under treatment or are just being seen for a checkup. The provider takes notes either on paper, or enters them directly into a computer in the exam room.

The information your provider records during a visit, during a procedure, during a surgery, etc., is that provider’s understanding of your health situation at that moment. It will most likely also contain billing information, as well.

The medical record is also a *legal document*. Providers are required to record certain information, in a certain format, and they are required to sign the documents they create in order to attest to their accuracy.

The medical record that your provider keeps on file belongs to your provider, not you. The information it contains is *about* you, but *does not belong to you*.

The HIPAA Privacy Rules define information in your health records as “Protected Health Information,” and they call your health record a “Designated Record Set.” Let’s just keep it easy and call it all a “medical record” in this document.

3. Why do you need a copy of your medical records?

Providers make mistakes. We’ve all heard horror stories about people who have had the wrong limb amputated, been treated with medicines that were not right for their condition, and . . .