

# HIPAA COMPLIANCE

## What Are Patient Rights?

As a person receiving health care, you have certain rights. Federal laws protect some of those rights, such as the right to view your medical records and keep them private. Many states also have laws protecting your rights. As a patient, you should expect quality care from your providers and know who is caring for you.

Modern dentistry aims to serve individual patients and the public. In doing so, it's important to recognize fundamental human rights and patients' rights as one of the core values of the dental profession. Our practice upholds these standards of quality and ethical service as a vital component to the care that we provide.

Your rights as a patient:

- You have the *right* to receive oral health care in a healthy, safe environment with compassion and respect to your rights and dignity.
- You have the *right* to competent, fair, and ethical oral health information and care
- You have the *right* to protect your personal privacy.
- You have the *right* to express concern for your needs, best interests, preferences, and complaints.
- You have the *right* to participate in the decision-making process that will affect your oral health. This also pertains to the right of **informed consent**, which is the permission granted in knowledge of the possible consequences or risks that is given by your doctor. Informed consent allows you the right to choose treatment with full knowledge of the risks and benefits.

You also can expect help when you leave the oral surgery practice. This includes knowing what self-care or follow-up care you may need, as well as help understanding your bill or insurance.

## What is HIPAA?

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was passed by Congress in 1996 and provides you with the ability to continue and transfer health insurance coverage when you change or lose your job. It reduces health care fraud and abuse, mandates industry-wide standards for information on electronic billing and other processes, and requires that your health information be protected and confidential.

The HIPAA Privacy regulations require providers and their business associates to develop and follow procedures that ensure the confidentiality and security of protected health information when it is transferred, received, handled, or shared. This applies to paper, oral, and electronic information.