

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES (HIPAA) Nourish and Align, Austin Rees, IBCLC, LMT

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law designed to protect your privacy whenever your health care providers (like the lactation consultant) have to discuss your case, or send information about you to different offices. I have to keep a file to record our consult – but I promise that the private, protected health information (PHI) in it will be kept confidential.

I can freely share all the details of your protected health information for purposes of “treatment, payment and health care operations.” That means I can talk to you about your situation, and discuss it with your other health care providers. If you are referred to other specialists, I can send the information on to them. I can also share information with your health insurance company if they need it. The law also requires me to share your information under other, very precise situations: for example, if a subpoena has been served on me, to turn over medical records ... or a federal agency is investigating a complaint that I have not been protecting your privacy.

Any other time I share your personal health information, it has to be with your specific authorization: you have to okay it, in writing, first. For example, you may want me to send information about your consultation to the Human Resources Dept. where you work, so they can pay you back under their workplace lactation support program. When you do give me permission to turn over information about you, I can give out only the minimum amount of information needed to get the job done. Under HIPAA, I can call or write you to remind you to come back for an appointment, or to tell you how you can get a product or service that might interest you and your family.

You have four rights under HIPAA:

- (1) Access (you can ask the practitioner to see all the PHI she has about you);
- (2) Amendment (you can ask the practitioner to change her files to amend inaccurate PHI);
- (3) Disclosure Accounting (you can ask to whom the practitioner has given your PHI) and
- (4) Restriction Request (you can put limits on the practitioner’s use and sharing of your PHI).

My duty under to HIPAA is to give you this notice, so you understand I have promised to keep your private health information confidential. If I change this notice in the future, I’ll give you a new copy.

I am the Privacy Officer for my one-person company. My name and phone no. are Austin Rees, [\(571\)409-0892](tel:5714090892). I will answer your questions or concerns about how I protect the privacy of your health information. You can complain if you think your privacy hasn’t been protected by the practitioner. I am the Privacy Officer, so first you’d have to complain to me ... and I have a duty to try to patch things up. I can’t penalize you for making a complaint. If I don’t address your complaint adequately, you can go over my head to the Office of Civil Rights of the federal Health and Human Services Dept., to ask that a formal investigation be made. You can get all the details from them on how to file a complaint. You can’t go to court and sue me over a HIPAA violation -- but you can ask HHS to investigate.