

Guidelines for Use of Email and Text Communication

For both HIPAA compliance and the protection of my patients, it is my practice to minimize the use of e-mail and text communication with patients and to encourage the use of secure messaging through the Patient Portal for all non-urgent matters. We do not initiate e-mail or text contact with patients on matters that would require the inclusion of Protected Health Information. Nonetheless, when a patient requests that they be able to initiate e-mail or text communications with me, I work to accommodate the request to the extent it would promote the patient's health and my provision of medical care. In that event, I will provide my e-mail address and cell phone number and the patient can initiate communication with me using e-mail or text. I will then assume, unless otherwise instructed, that the e-mail or text communication is acceptable to the patient.

It is important that you review and follow the guidelines for e-mail and text communications listed below. Please be aware that these guidelines may require modification as the need arises.

1. Please limit e-mail and text content to the following topics:
 - a. Non-treatment related healthcare issues (i.e. requests for general health information).
 - b. Non-urgent medical questions and matters.
2. Please place the general topic in the subject line of your e-mail so that it can be rapidly identified.
3. Communication with me utilizing personal e-mail and text is done with the knowledge that I do not encrypt e-mails or texts, that e-mail and text are not a secure mode of communication, and that your information is exposed in a public domain and could be accessed. While we will treat your communication with the same care as we do your medical records and phone calls, please do not include sensitive information in your e-mail or text. Specifically, do not include your social security number, financially sensitive information, or health information that you are not willing to expose to the risks of e-mail or text. Your communication may be viewed by me, a covering physician, and, as necessary, medical assistants and other staff.
4. Please keep e-mails brief and concise, and clearly identify yourself by name in the body of the e-mail.
5. Please be aware that while I will attempt to reply to e-mails and texts as quickly as possible, my replies may take more than 1 business day. **Please do not include time sensitive requests in an e-mail or text, including urgent or acute matters, or new conditions. Please use the telephone for all urgent requests, and for all emergency conditions, dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.**
6. We will not be able to respond to medical emergencies via e-mail or text.
7. Please understand that there will be times when I will not respond by e-mail or text but will call you directly. Please also understand that we do not include attachments containing Protected Health Information in any unencrypted e-mail or text communications.

Email and Text Informed Consent

I have carefully reviewed the preceding guidelines. I hereby authorize **Bayard W. Chang, MD** to communicate with me via e-mail or text regarding non-treatment related healthcare issues, and non-urgent medical questions and matters.

Signed _____

Date _____

Print Name _____

E-Mail Address _____

Date of Birth _____