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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT PATIENT E-MAIL

As a patient of *Mid Maryland Neurology PA*, you may request we communicate with you by electronic mail (e-mail). This Fact Sheet will inform you about the risks of communicating with your health care provider or program via e-mail and how *Mid Maryland Neurology, PA* will use and disclose provider/patient e-mail.

E-mail communications are a two-way communications. However, responses and replies to e-mails sent to or received by either you or your health care provider may be hours or days apart. This means that there could be a delay in receiving treatment for an acute condition.

E-mail messages on your computer, laptop, or other device have inherent privacy risks especially when your e-mail access is provided through your employer or when access to your e-mail messages is not password protected. *You should be aware of and understand that if you use e-mail provided by your employer, any e-mail sent on your employer's system may be viewed by your employer.*

Unencrypted e-mail provides as much privacy as a postcard. You should not communicate any information with your health care provider that you would not want to be included on a postcard that is sent through the Post Office.

E-mail is sent at the touch of a button. Once sent, an e-mail message cannot be recalled or cancelled. Errors in transmission, regardless of the sender's caution, can occur. You can also help minimize this risk by using only the e-mail address that you provide to our practice/ program/ provider.

In order to forward or process and respond to your e-mail, individuals at *Mid Maryland Neurology, PA* other than your health care provider may read your e-mail message. Your e-mail message is not a private communication between you and your treating provider.

Neither you nor the person reading your e-mail can see the facial expressions or gestures or hear the voice of the sender. E-mail can be misinterpreted.

At your health care provider's discretion, your e-mail message and any and all responses to them may become part of your medical record.

Appropriate uses for E-mail

E-mail may be used to request information and ask non-urgent questions. It is not an appropriate place to have long discussions regarding health issues and sensitive medicolegal matters. *It should not be used in emergencies.* If you are experiencing a sudden or severe change in your health or need an immediate response, contact your healthcare provider's office by telephone, call 911, or go to an emergency room. E-mail may be used for:

- General medical advice after an initial face-to-face visit
- Lab or radiology test results
- Patient educational material
- Other non-urgent communication

Communication with your doctor by e-mail is consider a privilege and should not be abused!