

# Frequently Asked Questions

Following are frequently asked questions about [obtaining medical records](#) from Riverside Women's Care.

## What is a Valid Authorization?

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) sets the standard for a valid authorization to release information. The following elements must be included for a HIPAA-compliant authorization:

- Full name and date of birth
- Statement of who is authorized to release records and who is authorized to receive records
- Purpose of Disclosure
- Type of information to be disclosed
- Psychiatric records or infectious diseases (i.e. HIV, Hepatitis C, TB, etc.) must be clearly marked or checked before they will be released and must be physician approved except for payment, treatment, or operations
- Statement acknowledging the patient's right to revoke or cancel authorization
- Statement indicating the patient's right to refuse the release of information
- Statement that information disclosed pursuant to the authorization may be subject to re-disclosure and is no longer protected under this authorization
- Statement that will not condition treatment on patient providing authorization
- An expiration date
- Signature of patient or patient's representative

## Is there a fee to obtain my records?

- No fee will be charged for records copied at the request of a health care provider (i.e. physician, nurse practitioner, nurse, etc.) or for records sent to a health care provider at the request of the patient for the purpose of continuing care. However, there is a fee charged for the search and duplication of medical records for personal reasons.
- The first 20 pages are free and a charge of \$0.45 per page in excess of 20 pages.
- Third party requests (attorney's, insurance, etc.) may be charged as outlined in SC state statute, Section 44-7-130, a fee of no more than \$0.65 per page up to 30 pages and \$0.50 per page thereafter will be billed.
- In certain cases, a clerical fee of \$15.00 will be administered. Requestors will be sent a prepayment invoice upon determination of total cost.

## What is included within a medical record and what should I request?

If you are not requesting your complete chart, the following provides a brief summary of the various parts of a medical record which may help to identify information to request:

Discharge Summary, History & Physical, Operative Reports, Radiology Reports, Labs, Office Visits/Notes, Consultations, ED Reports.

**Please note:** We cannot release records that we may have on file that we obtained from another facility or labs, pathology reports, etc, that were not ordered by one of our physicians. You would need to receive your records directly from that provider.

## When should I expect to receive my medical records?

According to South Carolina Statute, Section 44-7-325, Riverside Women's Care shall comply with a request for medical records no later than 45 days after the request has been received. Our goal is to complete requests within 7 to 30 days of receipt. We understand that at times extenuating circumstances do not allow for 30 days; therefore, we make every effort to accommodate to satisfy our patients' needs.

## Who can legally sign for medical records?

- **Healthcare Power of Attorney:**
  - The Patient and/or anyone who is named as a decision maker or attorney-in-fact under a **healthcare** power of attorney signed by the patient.
- **Durable Power of Attorney:**
  - If there is a **durable** power of attorney, a pre-approval is required by the Release of Information staff.
- If the patient is deceased, the record must be requested by the court appointed "personal representative" presenting a raised seal original certificate of appointment issued by the Probate Court.
- If the patient is **under** the age of 16, the patient's parent may sign.