

# GUIDELINES

## **Email & Text Communications With Scott Tong, MD, his office staff and covering providers.**

For both HIPAA compliance and the protection of my patients, it is my practice to minimize the use of email 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 email 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 email 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 email address and cell phone number and the patient can initiate communication with me using email or text. I will then assume, unless otherwise instructed, that the email or text communication is acceptable to the patient.

Communication via email or text message can be effective in the right situations. For your protection, and to comply with Federal Privacy laws, please follow these guidelines:

1. Limit emails and texts to non-urgent medical questions and matters.
2. Place the topic of your email in the Subject line for rapid identification.
3. Clearly identify yourself in the body of the email.
4. **Please do not use email or text to report acute, urgent, or new conditions. During office hours, please call my main office line. After hours, please call my cell for urgent requests. For all emergencies dial 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.**

Although I will attempt to reply to emails and texts as quickly as possible, my replies may take more than one business day. In some cases, I may call you directly rather than respond by email or text.

My office does not encrypt emails or text messages. Emails and text messages are not secure protected modes of communication. Your information may be available for others to view and/or capture in the public domain. Although I will treat your communication with the same care as I do your medical records and phone calls, please do not include sensitive information in your emails or text messages. Specifically, do **not** include your social security number, financial information, or private personal health information.

I will not include attachments containing Protected Health Information in any unencrypted email or text communications.

### Email and Text Informed Consent

I have carefully reviewed these guidelines. I hereby authorize **Scott Tong, MD, his staff or covering providers** to communicate with me via email or text message regarding non-treatment related healthcare issues, and non-urgent medical questions or concerns.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_