



PATIENT EMAIL GUIDELINES

- 1. The security and privacy of e-mail cannot be guaranteed.** E-mail is transmitted across the Internet, which is a public network of computers. Because it is a public network, it is possible that e-mail messages may be accessible by people other than the sender and recipient. Patients should therefore avoid or minimize sending personal health information in e-mail messages.
- 2. E-mail should never be used in an emergency.** There is no way to guarantee the amount of time it will take for an e-mail to be transmitted from sender to recipient. E-mail should therefore never be used as a means of communicating in urgent or emergency situations. Instead, patients are advised to call 911 immediately.
- 3. We cannot guarantee how long it will take to read or respond to e-mail from patients.** We may not check e-mail every day, and when we do, it will not be monitored continuously. Our workload may also prevent us from reading or responding to e-mail promptly. For these reasons, time-sensitive messages should not be communicated to us by e-mail.
- 4. E-mail should be used in conjunction with other forms of communication.** E-mail may be useful for short, infrequent messages, but it should not be your only means of communication with us. In particular, oral discussions are an important part of the way we care for patients. We also prefer hardcopy documents for official messages.
- 5. Patients should review our Notice of Privacy Practices.** Our Notice of Privacy Practices provides important information about how and when we use and disclose personal information about you. You may obtain a copy on our web site, in our office, or by mail.

**Southern Family Medicine is planning to implement a Patient Portal through www.southernfamilymed.com that will allow you to access your health record on-line. If you are interested in this convenience, please fill out your name and email address below. You will be notified via the website when the Patient Portal is available.

I have read the above guidelines and indicate that I understand by signing below:

Signature: _____

Print clearly: _____

Your email information: _____