



Iowa Acupuncture Clinic Privacy and Technology Statement

Our clinic exists in a unique place between ancient and modern, science and wisdom, people and technology.

Our mission is to care for each individual with the utmost respect and integrity while considering his/her place in their family, community and society.

HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

We follow the rules set by HIPAA. ([see the official webpage](#))

The HIPAA law defines the privacy and permitted uses of your private health/medical information [in this website](#).

However, at our clinic, we have a more restricting list of permitted uses of your information. Specifically, we believe that the personal privacy of your health and medical data is your fundamental right. And except in personal emergency situations (see below), the only people/entities who have access to that data are those you explicitly identify.

One of your new patient clinic forms is our HIPAA form. It allows you to add and remove access of such people/entities. Contact our clinic if you need to adjust the form.

Additionally, we can provide a Medical Records Release form that allows us to discuss your health/medical conditions with other legal or medical entities and health practitioners. We also will abide by any such forms you establish with other clinics/practitioners/lawyers that lists us as an authorized entity.

Personal Emergency Situations

What would be the personal emergency situations that we might choose to share a limited portion of your health/medical information with others?

While still complying with the HIPAA law, we might need to contact people in your private life and share your information. An example, would be to assist in caring for you during a serious illness or medical emergency. There are times a patient does not or cannot explicitly give us permission, yet our good samaritan role requires us to discuss the patient's health with others. This is allowed in HIPAA and it is a vital action that relies on our professional wisdom and experience. We do not take this lightly.

Your Health/Medical Digital Data

In regard to our technology, the Iowa Acupuncture Clinic attempts to fully protect all of the health/medical digital data that we maintain on each customer/patient. We believe we should exceed the privacy guaranteed by HIPAA, so we have never kept any of our patient medical/health information on any online or cloud systems. In fact, until 2020, we never used anything other than paper and physical charts.

Of course, there are Electronic Medical Record systems available that follow the HIPAA guidelines, but they are not enough protection for true privacy. We believe that your health information is solely yours and we will only share it with those who you explicitly request.

Customer/Patient Contact Via Phone, Texting and Emails.

Since abandoning our landline in 2020, we conduct clinic phone and texting business via Verizon cellular and Apple devices. The clinic emails are processed thru a Hostgator mail server. All of your information is handled in compliance with HIPAA rules.

Square: Customer/Patient Contacts and Payment Processing System

We use the online Square platform for handling our credit card processing, the clinic scheduling and patient communication. Square is not an Electronic Medical Records company. The only information that Square has access to is your contact information, your visit schedule and your payment transactions history at our clinic. None of your health information is ever uploaded to Square. We utilize Square for customer/patient communications such as scheduling, question & answers, and other clinic business. We also use Square for clinic marketing thru texts and emails.

Telemedicine.

Telemedicine/Telehealth is defined as any delivery of medicine and patient care over a distance via some form of communication. It refers to any communication between patient and care provider for any health/medical reason. Even a simple question via phone call or text is considered Telemedicine/Telehealth. ([See this useful online discussion](#)).

Please realize that the Iowa Acupuncture Clinic follows all HIPPA and privacy considerations whenever we communicate with our patients, no matter the technology.

Jotform: Online Patient Intake Forms.

With the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic initially requiring us to reduce the physical contact between people, the Iowa Acupuncture Clinic needed to become more “digital” and less paper. Our solution has been the use of online forms to allow our patients to send their visit health information prior to their appointments. The program we use is jotform.com. It’s a simple online platform for forms. It is HIPAA compliant, which means the forms are as secure as possible. But it is not a EHR program. The difference is profound. An EHR program codifies and collects all of your individual health information, allowing your record to be digested and shared. Theoretically, only HIPAA providers and those who you approve would have access to your information. However, much respectable research has shown how effectively HIPAA is legally circumvented by marketing companies and their clients. We feel this is a betrayal of your privacy and we work to protect that right.

Jotform does not codify the information you provide, instead it is stored as form fields to be converted into a PDF that is securely sent to our clinic. We then store that form and any of your other information on our secure hard-drive physically located in our clinic. We then delete the data from the jotform website. Of course, a brazen hacker can get into any information. But if one would hack our hard-drive, they would have to read every single PDF in order to gain any information about your health. It’s the most secure we can keep your medical information. We hope that gives you confidence in our system.

We hope that this document answers any questions or concerns about your privacy and our use of technology. Please feel free to contact us for any further information.

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