

ERIC M. KRAUS , M.D., F.A.C.S.
JOHN C. MUNDY, M.D., F.A.C.S.
SU W. TEOH, M.D.
Adult and Pediatric Otology

AMY M. DAUGHTON, M.Ed., CCC/A
LAURA M. TALLANT, Au. D.
STEPHANIE NANCE, M.A., CCC/A
Audiology

1126 N. Church Street, Suite 201
Greensboro, NC 27401



Surgery & Diseases of the Ear
Pediatric Otolaryngology
Vestibular Disorders
Audiology
Hearing Aid Center & Service
Implantable Hearing Devices
Cochlear Implants

Phone (336) 273-9932
Fax (336) 273-9936

THE EAR CENTER OF GREENSBORO, P.A.

Email Policy **The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A.** **v. 1.2009**

To Our Patients:

The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A. recognizes that email may provide benefits for communicating with patients by facilitating ease, quickness, and efficiency. At this time, our use of email is limited to non-urgent and non-emergent communications that are not concerned with timeliness. Due to the complexities of appointment and surgery scheduling, office appointments and surgical operations are not scheduled by email.

Purpose: Because we are committed to maintaining strict patient confidentiality and timeliness, the Ear Center has developed an email policy to permit the judicious use of email. By signing our "Email Policy", you acknowledge that you have read and understand the policy and agree to its terms.

1. **Confidentiality & Timeliness:** It is well recognized that the use of email in the health care setting has the potential for creating special issues concerning confidentiality and timeliness. Email sent to any email address has the potential to be accessed by unintended parties.

Patients/parents/legal guardians acknowledge that email is not a confidential or private method of communicating with anyone. By signing this form, you understand that The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and employees:

- (1) will not be encrypting email transmissions,
(2) will not be held responsible for any email transmissions,
(3) will be held harmless, and
(4) will be indemnified by the intended receiving party for all risks, including but not limited to, any potential issues of confidentiality or privacy concerning any and all email correspondence.

2. **Handling of Emergencies & Timeliness:** Patients/parents/legal guardians understand and agree that urgent-care or emergency situations are **never** to be communicated via email. Urgent or emergent situations should always be communicated in person or over the telephone. Urgent or emergent situations, by definition, require an office, urgent care, or emergency department visit. It is understood that email sent to The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and employees cannot, and will not, be checked according to any regular schedule and that any issue requiring a timely response should be handled in person or over the telephone. The Ear Center does not schedule office appointments or surgical operations via email. All appointments should be scheduled in person or over the telephone.

3. **Discussing Sensitive/Private Issues & Reporting Bad News:** Sensitive or private issues should not be discussed via email communications. Email will not be used to report bad or potentially distressing news to any patient/parent/legal guardian or family member. Examples of such communications would include, but are not limited to upsetting: (1) laboratory and pathology reports, (2) imaging results (CT and MRI scans, angiograms, etc.), (3) audiograms, (4) health status, etc.
4. **Appropriate Parties:** Email communication shall be strictly limited to current patients/parents/legal guardians of the P.A. that are being actively treated or followed. Email should not, and will not, be used as a substitute for direct, face-to-face patient interaction.
5. **Medical Records:** Patients/parents/legal guardians understand that email correspondence will be filed in the patient's medical record. At this time, medical records are not being transmitted by email.
6. **Access to Email:** Patients/parents/legal guardians understand that The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and employees will monitor and have access to all email communications. From time to time, The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and staff may audit emails for compliance with the "*Email Policy*".
7. **Discretion to Withdraw Permission:** Patients/parents/legal guardians are free to withdraw their permission to communicate via email with The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., at any time, by providing written notice. Similarly, The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and employees, at their discretion, reserve the right: (1) to discontinue email communications at any time, with or without cause, and (2) to amend the "*Email Policy*" at any time.

Acknowledgement:

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the "*Email Policy*" of The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A. and that I agree to all of its terms and conditions. I give my permission to The Ear Center of Greensboro, P.A., its physicians, and its employees, to communicate with me by email and that my permission is granted in full and without condition. I understand that I may withdraw my permission, in writing, at any time.

Printed Name of Patient/Parent/Legal Guardian

Signature of Patient/Parent/Legal Guardian

Date