



Marathon

Family Health Team

22 Peninsula Road, Marathon, ON P0T 2E0
Tel: 807.229.3243 Fax: 807.229.2672

PATIENT EMAIL COMMUNICATION CONSENT FORM

WHAT THIS CONSENT COVERS

In this form, "email communication with MFHT" means email communication with authorized members of the Marathon Family Health Team (MFHT), including physicians, health care providers and administrative staff, as appropriate.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Despite reasonable efforts to protect the privacy and security of electronic communication, MFHT cannot guarantee the security or confidentiality of email communication. Patients should not agree to communicate with MFHT by email unless they understand and accept the following risks:

- Email is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed documents, and the identity of the sender cannot always be verified.
- Email may be forwarded, intercepted, misdirected, stored, or altered without the knowledge or permission of MFHT or the patient.
- Copies of emails may continue to exist in backup systems or other locations, even after deletion.
- Email communication may be disclosed where required by law, such as by court order or duty to report.
- Employers and email service providers may have the right to access emails sent through their systems.
- Email may introduce malware or disrupt computer systems.

APPROPRIATE USE OF EMAIL

Email may be used for:

- Scheduling non-urgent appointments
- Providing directions or referral information
- Providing general educational or health promotion information
- Sending electronic documents such as consent forms, questionnaires, resources, or links

Email **must not** be used for:

- Emergencies, urgent problems, or time-sensitive matters. In an emergency, call **911** or go to the nearest hospital emergency department



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- Situations where you are unsure whether your symptoms are urgent. In these cases, please call the clinic at **807-229-3243**
- Complex or sensitive information. Emails should be brief; sensitive concerns should be discussed by phone or in person

All email communications to or from the patient will be saved as part of the patient's electronic medical record.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL

If you choose to communicate with MFHT by email, you agree to:

- Use a personal email account when possible and avoid employer computers
- Keep your email address up to date with MFHT
- Include in each email:
 - a clear subject line (for example, "Prescription renewal")
 - your full name
 - a phone number where you can be reached
- Review your email before sending to ensure it is clear and complete
- Follow up if you do not receive a response within a reasonable time
- Take reasonable steps to protect your privacy (for example, passwords or screen locks)
- Withdraw consent only by written or email notice to MFHT
- Not rely on email if your condition worsens or requires urgent attention

You also agree to either:

- Use encryption software, **or** waive encryption, with the understanding that this increases privacy risk

HOW MFHT MANAGES EMAIL COMMUNICATION

MFHT will use reasonable measures, including encryption, to protect the security and confidentiality of email communication. However, MFHT cannot guarantee confidentiality and will not be responsible for improper disclosure of information unless it results from intentional misconduct by MFHT staff.

Consent to email communication with MFHT applies to the organization as a whole, is inclusive to all authorized members, and is not limited to a single provider, unless the patient specifies limitations in writing.

Additional conditions include:

- Email is monitored during regular clinic office hours only (not evenings or weekends).



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- Emails are triaged and responded to based on clinic priorities.
- MFHT aims to respond within **48 business hours**, but this timeframe cannot be guaranteed.
- Emails related to health care may be included in the patient's medical record and accessed by authorized MFHT staff for care or operational purposes.
- Emails may be shared within MFHT as needed to support patient care and clinic operations. They will not be shared with independent third parties without the patient's prior written consent, except where authorized or required by law, including when they form part of the medical record.
- Email communication is not a substitute for in-person clinical assessment.
- If a response is required and not received, the patient is responsible for following up.
- Patients must inform MFHT of any information they do not want communicated by email; this will be documented in the medical record.

LIMITS ON EMAIL COMMUNICATION

You may identify any types of information you do **not** want sent by email, or any MFHT staff or providers you do **not** wish to communicate with by email.

Please list any limits below:

You can change these limits at any time by notifying MFHT in writing.

PATIENT CONSENT

By signing below, you confirm that:

- You have read and understood this form.
- You understand the risks of email communication.
- You consent to email communication with MFHT as a team, unless limits are specified in writing.
- You understand that MFHT may stop email communication if this consent is misused or if MFHT no longer offers email communication.
- All of your questions have been answered.

Patient name: _____

Patient email: _____

Patient signature _____

Date: _____