



Columbus Medical
Association

THE **TOP TEN** QUESTIONS
YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR
MEDICAL RECORDS

1. ***Whose records are they anyway?***

- ◆ Medical records are for the physician's use and are legally the property of the physician.

2. ***Am I entitled to copies of my records?***

- ◆ Yes, ethically, with some legal exceptions, the physician has an obligation to provide the requesting patient a copy or synopsis of the records.

3. ***Does the doctor have a right to charge me for copies of my records?***

- ◆ Yes. Reasonable charges are not only routine, but also fair, in view of the burgeoning administrative costs in maintaining and protecting them. Ohio Revised Code §3701.741 provides for fees for records

4. ***Should I routinely keep copies of my inoculation records and/or my children's medical records?***

- ◆ Yes. To be pro-active, be sure to keep records of your inoculations, major or chronic illnesses or conditions, physicians' full names with correct spellings, their specialties (e.g., family practice, neurology, cardiology), and their office addresses.

5. ***If I change jobs and have a new insurance company which requires my finding a new physician, can I get copies of my medical records for my new physician?***

- ◆ Yes. You must provide a signed release form so that your current physician may then legally be permitted to give this information to your new physician.

6. ***How long should it take for the physician's office to get copies to me after I place my written request?***

- ◆ An average turn around time should be about 3 weeks, but there is no law which addresses this specific issue.

7. ***If my physician has retired, or is deceased, how can I get copies of my medical records?***

- ◆ No central repository for medical records exists. If your physician did not have an associate who may have retained the records, you may contact the Columbus Medical Association for assistance.

8. ***What should I do about records if my physician is about to retire ?***

- ◆ Before your physician retires, your physician will advise you what to do about medical records. **Follow the doctor's orders!** If he/she advises you to pick up copies of the records or to have them transferred to your new physician, do it immediately.

9. ***Can my doctor withhold copies of my medical records if I still owe a balance on my bill?***

- ◆ AMA guidelines stress that a physician should not withhold copies of records if there is an outstanding balance.

10. ***Where can I go for help if I have questions or problems with these or other medical issues?***

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