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ARBITRATION EXPLANATION

Many of our patients have questions why Crystal Community ENT has begun requiring our patients to sign an arbitration agreement. Many are concerned that this means they are giving up the right to sue and also their right to compensation for any situation in which they might have a legitimate complaint against the doctor or his office. This in fact is not the case and not our intent.

Lawsuits are the most common method of resolving disputes in this country. Unfortunately, the process of reaching a resolution is an extremely long, complicated and often painful process for all of those involved. Most suits drag on for years before a jury ever reaches a verdict, which then also delays any required compensation. The extended time period creates added expense for both sides and reduces the potential recovery for the patient.

Arbitration is a much more efficient process; the arbitrators are chosen by both sides and are professionals who are trained to help arrive at a timelier conclusion. The process will also be much less disruptive to the life of both the patient and doctor and less expensive. It is for these reasons that we have chosen to use arbitration as our method of resolving disputes.

As always, we will strive to provide quality medical care and service to our patients, and we hope that the arbitration system will rarely if ever be needed by our patients.

What is arbitration?

- Arbitration is the process of resolving disputes in front of a panel of neutral arbitrators.

Am I giving up my right to sue?

- No, Arbitration takes the place of and avoids a lengthy jury trial. This document simply states that you must go through the arbitration process, in order to find a neutral resolution.

Why are we doing this?

- Traditionally, medical malpractice suits have been resolved through litigation and a process that is time consuming, expensive and stressful for both sides. The high financial and emotional costs of litigation have given rise to binding arbitration, which is an alternative method for resolving disputes. The arbitration process has proven to be faster and less costly to both parties involved.

What happens if I do not sign?

- If you are an existing patient, in the middle of treatment and refuse to sign the arbitration agreement, after the treatment for the current problem has completed you will be provided with a 30 day notice to find another ENT Physician.
- If you are a new patient or an existing patient that has not been seen for a while and is not in current treatment, you will not be seen.

Arbitration is not new and has been used by physicians since 1920, with the ever increasing costs, arbitration has become more popular and a viable alternative to resolving disputes in courts.