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## **A MESSAGE TO PATIENTS ABOUT ARBITRATION**

When you come to the office you will be asked to sign an arbitration agreement. By signing this agreement we are agreeing that any dispute arising out of the medical services you receive is to be resolved in binding arbitration rather than a suit in court. Lawsuits are something that no one anticipates and everyone hopes to avoid. We believe that the method of resolving disputes by arbitration is one of the fairest systems for both patients and physicians. Arbitration agreements between health care providers and their patients have long been recognized and approved by the California courts.

By signing this agreement you are changing the place where your claim will be presented. You may still call witnesses and present evidence. Each party selects an arbitrator (party arbitrators), who then select third, neutral arbitrator. These three arbitrators hear the case. This agreement generally helps to limit the legal costs for both patients and physicians. Further, both parties are spared some of the rigors of trial and publicity that may accompany judicial proceedings.

Our goal, of course, is to provide medical care in such a way as to avoid any such dispute. We know that most problems begin with communication. Therefore, if you have any questions about your care, please ask us.