Virtual Visit Tips

Virtual visits are a convenient option for communicating with your doctor, offering an additional way for you to manage your healthcare. There are limitations when an appointment is not in-person—a physician cannot touch your body, listen to your heart or lungs, or closely examine your eyes, ears or mouth. Still, there are many instances in which you are able to adequately describe your symptoms to help your doctor decide what treatment is best for you or if you need an in-office visit. There are several ways you can prepare for your virtual visit, whether it will be over the phone or using video chat.

Have your health information available.

If you are a current patient, your physician will have access to your medical record, but it is helpful to have the following information readily available for the conversation with your doctor.

- Make a list of your current symptoms, when they started and how severe they are.
- Track your current health information and have it available to share. Have you had a fever? If so, what is your temperature, and has it changed? If you have a blood pressure monitor, what is your most recent reading?
- Make a list of any chronic conditions you have and list of medicines you are currently taking.
- Make a list of questions for your doctor about your symptoms.
- Have the contact information for your preferred pharmacy ready to share, in case a prescription is needed.

Make sure your technology is ready.

- Your doctor’s office will be in touch before your appointment and will provide instructions for either a phone call or video visit. Whether your visit will use phone or video, find a quiet, private space for your appointment.
- Be sure the device you will be using (phone, tablet, computer) is fully charged or plugged in.
- If your appointment will be a video visit, test the technology beforehand so you are familiar with how it works.
- If you receive a phone call from an unknown number close to your appointment time, please answer it. It could be your physician trying to reach you.

Communicate clearly with your doctor during your visit.

- Have paper and pen ready to take notes during the visit.
- Be aware that there may be a high volume of virtual visits, so you may have to wait to be connected.
- Feel comfortable to talk and share with your doctor just as you would during an in-person visit.
- Answer the doctor’s questions as clearly and to the point as possible.
- Make notes of the doctor’s recommendations and ask questions if something is unclear.

Please remember, while virtual visits are a convenient option, if you have a MyChart patient portal account, sending a message that way is also an efficient way to communicate with your care team.