

Speak Up™ At Your Telehealth Visit



The use of telehealth — also called virtual health services — is growing in popularity. Whether a telehealth visit takes place over the telephone or by video conference, telehealth is changing the way you can reach your doctor and other healthcare providers.

Telehealth has many benefits. It saves travel time and transportation costs, increases access to specialists and for second opinions, and can take place almost anywhere you can have a private conversation — either in the comfort of your home or a safe place.

Some healthcare services that may be conducted via telehealth are:

- Individual or group therapy sessions, counseling sessions.
- Monitoring chronic conditions such as diabetes using a hybrid approach – that is, alternating in-person visits with telehealth evaluations. Chronic conditions should not be monitored using only telehealth.
- Prenatal care.
- Genetic counseling.
- Following up after an in-person visit.
- Observation for acute respiratory viral illnesses.



However, some healthcare services are not appropriate for telehealth or require a certain type of telehealth platform. Discuss with your doctor or care team whether a telehealth visit will work for you and get instructions and ask questions about what you can expect of a telehealth visit.

You may experience some challenges during a telehealth visit. Prepare for the best telehealth visit possible by:

- Reading any instructions sent by the doctor's office or care team.
- Checking with your insurance provider to see if the telehealth service is covered.
- Asking for assistance to communicate effectively, such as closed captioning or requesting someone who speaks your preferred language.
- Writing down any questions you have or any information your care team has requested.
- Keeping a list of any medications you are taking or any symptoms you are experiencing.
- Testing your equipment, whether it is a mobile phone, tablet, or a computer.
- Finding a comfortable, quiet and private place with a lot of light in your home or wherever you are going to be when the telehealth visit takes place.
- Being prepared to troubleshoot your equipment. This may include checking to see if your internet connection is working, making sure your device (mobile phone, tablet, or computer) is fully charged, needing to restart your device, or finding a different device to use if the first doesn't work.



Using electronic devices or unknown applications can be daunting, so if you do not feel comfortable, speak up to let your doctor or care team know.

The goal of Speak Up™ is to help patients and their advocates become active in their care.

Speak Up™ materials are intended for the public and have been put into a simplified (i.e., easy-to-read) format to reach a wider audience. They are not meant to be comprehensive statements of standards interpretation or other accreditation requirements, nor are they intended to represent evidence-based clinical practices or clinical practice guidelines. Thus, care should be exercised in using the content of Speak Up™ materials. Speak Up™ materials are available to all health care organizations; their use does not indicate that an organization is accredited by The Joint Commission.