

# Telehealth 101 for Patients

If you're in need of health care, your provider may ask you to visit him or her virtually to limit in-office contact and maximize efficiency. Many providers are opting for telehealth – remote video consultations via your phone, tablet or computer – to discuss symptoms, explore treatment options, etc. Before you have your first telehealth visit, it helps to be prepared for what to expect. To help you get ready, here's a guide:

## Make a List

- Come prepared with a list of questions for your provider. Our “Patient-Provider Discussion Guide” is a great tool.
- Write down a list of your symptoms. Indicate when they started and their severity.
  - Where, specifically, are you experiencing pain or discomfort?
  - Are you having difficulty making certain movements?
  - When did you first notice the pain?
  - On a scale of 1–10, with 10 being the most severe, how would you rate your pain today? Has this changed in the past week? Month?
- Have your personal information handy.
  - What's your current height and weight?
  - Do you have a blood pressure monitor? If so, what is your blood pressure?
  - What's your temperature? Has it changed?
- List any chronic conditions you have.
- List all of your current medications, dosages and frequency of taking.
- Have you been screened or tested for SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19? If so, what were the results?
- If you are an existing patient of the provider's health system, have your medical record number or other identifying information available so your provider can look up your electronic medical record.
- Familiarize yourself with the technology or system that will be used for your call. Your visit may occur through a variety of platforms – FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, etc. – it's better to know ahead of time and be prepared. If required for telehealth visits, download your health system's app in advance.

## Your Notes

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## Plug In and Get Comfortable

- Make sure your device (phone, tablet, computer) is fully charged and plugged in.
- Make sure you have a reliable internet connection.
- Sit in a comfortable place for the visit and make sure your camera provides a clear view of you for the provider.
- If you're in a shared space, you may want to use a headset or headphones with a microphone, or move to a private space to have the conversation.
- Have paper and pen ready to take notes.
- If you normally would have brought a caregiver to your appointment in person, ask if they can join you for the telehealth visit. Having them in the room can help you remember to ask any questions you may forget.
- Plan to be prepared 10 minutes early with your device connected so you are ready to begin at the time of your appointment.
- To make the best use of this call, contain your questions to the condition(s) for this visit, unless asked to expand any of your answers.

## Speak Clearly and Concisely

- Understand that you may have to wait to be connected.
- Make sure your provider can hear you and see you through your camera.
- Clearly describe your symptoms.
- Answer the provider's questions concisely and with as many details as possible.
- Make notes of your provider's recommendations and ask questions if you are unsure about anything.

## Your Notes

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