

Is a Virtual Visit Right for Me?

For patients and their families

Read this brochure to help you decide:

- if a virtual visit is right for your care needs
- if you would prefer a virtual visit
- what type of virtual visit may be best for you

What is a virtual visit?

During a virtual visit, you do not come to the hospital to meet in person. Instead, you speak with your care team using a regular telephone, smartphone, tablet or computer.

How can I decide if a virtual visit is right for me?

The decision to have a virtual visit is based on your choice and care needs. The type of virtual visit (phone or video) is decided based on the technology you and the clinic have access to as well as your care needs.

Is a virtual visit right for my care needs?

Virtual visits are a safe and reliable option for many care needs. Your health care team will consider your care needs before offering you a virtual visit.



Some examples of care needs where virtual visits work well are:

- Having a consultation with a health care provider.
- Reviewing test results or reports, such as blood tests or imaging results.
- Planning for your future in-person care needs.
- Monitoring and follow-up for chronic (long-term) disease.
- Reviewing patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) or patient reported experience measures (PREMs), such as questionnaires or screening forms you have completed.
- Counselling.
- Taking part in patient and family education (individual or group education).

A virtual visit may also be offered for other care needs such as:

- Getting care or treatment for urgent but not life-threatening symptoms. Visit the [UHN Emergency Department Virtual Visits](https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Visit_UHN/Emergency/Pages/ED_Virtual_Visits.aspx) website (https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Visit_UHN/Emergency/Pages/ED_Virtual_Visits.aspx) for more information.
- Participating in certain treatments, such as rehab therapy.
- Getting a prescription for treatments or medications. Please note that some medications have a high risk of causing harm if they are used incorrectly. Your health care provider may prefer to prescribe these types of medications at an in-person visit instead.
- Having a physical exam or assessment to look at a part of your body or to examine your muscle or joint movement.

If you are expecting a diagnosis or news from your health care provider, talk to your care team about your preference for in-person or virtual visits.

Would I prefer to have a virtual visit?

To help you decide whether you would like to have a virtual visit, ask yourself:

- **Will it be more convenient and comfortable for me?** For example, staying at home instead of being in the clinic for your visit.
- **Will it save me time?** For example, time spent travelling to the clinic for your visit.
- **Will it save me money?** For example, travel and parking expenses, lost wages for taking time off work, or childcare.
- **Will it be easier to include my care partner (family/caregiver)?** For example, my care partner can join my virtual visit from another location, and does not have to travel to the clinic.
- **Will I feel comfortable with my health care provider if I do not see them in-person?** For example, seeing and hearing my health care provider on a computer or hearing them on the phone.
- **Will I feel comfortable using technology for my virtual visit?** For example, having a phone call, or a video call (videoconference) using a computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone.
- **Will I feel comfortable using extra equipment if needed during my virtual visit?** For example, using a blood pressure monitor or scale to measure my weight.

What type of virtual visit is best for me?

Your virtual visit may be by phone or video (videoconference). The checklists below will help you and your health care team decide which one may be best for you.

Phone Visit Checklist

Myself and my care partner:

- Feel comfortable communicating over a phone call.
- Feel comfortable having a virtual visit without seeing my health care provider or my provider seeing me (using video or videoconferencing).
- Have a quiet, safe and private space where I can have my phone visit.
- Have a space where I can do the activities I usually do during my visit, such as taking my own weight and blood pressure.
- Have access to a phone and a phone number.

If you have checked all the boxes above, a phone visit may be best for you. Let your health care team know you prefer phone visits.

Video (Videoconference) Visit Checklist

Myself and my care partner:

- Feel comfortable communicating over a video call or videoconference.
- Feel it is important to see my health care provider and for my health care provider to see me (using video or videoconferencing).
- Have a quiet, safe and private space where I can have my video visit.
- Have a space where I can do the activities I usually do during my visit, such as showing my health care provider a part of my body or doing rehabilitation exercises.
- Have an email address.
- Have a private and stable internet connection.
- Have access to at least 1 of the following devices:
 - a computer with a speaker, microphone, and camera (desktop or laptop)
 - a tablet (iPad, Android, or Microsoft Surface)
 - a smartphone (iPhone, or Android)

If you have checked all the boxes above, a video (videoconference) visit may be best for you. Let your health care team know you prefer video visits.

Can I access an interpreter during my virtual visit?

Interpretation services are available for all virtual visits. Let your health care team know before your appointment if you need an interpreter.

Where can I learn more about virtual visits at UHN?

For more information about virtual visits, please go to the [Virtual Care at UHN](https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Virtual_Care) webpage (https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Virtual_Care).



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