

Telehealth Patient Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is a telehealth visit?

A telehealth visit is an audio-visual, real-time exchange between you and your NIH Clinical Center provider instead of a scheduled in-person appointment. These types of visits are also sometimes referred to as telemedicine visits.

2. Where do these visits take place?

You can have the visit from the comfort and safety of your own home via computer, tablet or cell phone with video capability. Your provider may also be at his/her home, office, or at the NIH Clinical Center.

3. How does the visit take place?

First, you will be contacted by a member of the clinical team to schedule an appointment. Both you and your provider will then receive a link (Microsoft Teams) via email with which you will use to conduct the visit. At the scheduled time of the appointment, you and your provider will click on the link and then connect for a face-to-face visit.

Additionally, you will receive a technical readiness call from the Telehealth Concierge Service the day prior to your scheduled telehealth visit.

4. Can I schedule my own telehealth visit?

Telehealth visits must be requested by your provider and scheduled by a member of the clinical team. If you have any questions about whether this may be an option for you, please contact your provider.

5. Can any appointment be conducted via telehealth?

We are utilizing telehealth across many service lines, but it's important to understand that not all appointment types are appropriate for telehealth. Your provider will look closely at your care needs and the requirements of the research study you are participating in to determine whether an in-person or telehealth appointment is most appropriate. He or she must give the authorization to move forward with conducting a telehealth visit. In some instances, your provider will refer you to care providers near you – such as your existing providers, community providers, or your local Emergency Room.

6. How do I cancel or reschedule a telehealth visit?

Contact your provider to let him/her know that you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment. They will make arrangements to schedule another appointment if necessary.

7. What if I prefer an onsite visit to a telehealth appointment?

With the current COVID-19 outbreak, you may be asked by your provider to move an upcoming in-person appointment to a telehealth appointment(s). We understand that

meeting with your provider virtually is a change; however, due to the current public health emergency, your provider may deem it both clinically appropriate and advisable, in order to protect your health and safety.

8. Will I be able to get my medications following a telehealth visit like I would following an onsite appointment?

Discuss the need for any medication refills with your provider during your telehealth visit. He or she will help you as best they can, but there may be limitations on what types of medications can be prescribed during a telehealth visit under the research protocol.

9. Will my telehealth visit be recorded?

No, the technology being used for NIH Clinical Center telehealth visits does not permit recording of any portions of these appointments. In addition, you will be unable to record the visit using the MS Teams application and are not permitted to record the visit using other technology – either of yourself or the practitioner by video or audio-only. Doing so may prevent you from being able to use telehealth for future appointments.

10. Will I be able to see my notes following a telehealth visit in my patient portal account just like I do now for onsite appointments?

Yes. If you have an NIH Clinical Center Patient Portal account, visit notes documented in your electronic medical record will be available for you to review in your patient portal account. For more information about the patient portal, visit this website:

<https://www.cc.nih.gov/followmyhealth/index.html>

11. What is the technology? Is there a login required? Password needed?

The technology is called Microsoft Teams (MS Teams). The convenience of this technology means no login is required, and you do not need to remember a username or password. When accessing MS Teams, it will ask you to sign in or to create an account. Please note that an account is **not** required to access your appointment and you will not need to login in using a username or password.

- If using a laptop or other desktop computer, you will simply go to your email account and click on the link found in the email invite we sent you at the time of your scheduled appointment.
- If using a cellular phone or tablet, you will download the free MS Teams application on your mobile device from the App Store. Click the link in your telehealth email that will then launch the MS Teams application to join your appointment.

12. Is the technology safe and secure?

Yes. Both the HHS and NIH have approved the use of Microsoft Teams as a secure platform. Additionally, MS Teams satisfies HHS requirements for transmission of medical information.

13. Is there technical support if I have questions or problems with the technology?

Yes. If you have technical questions or need assistance, you can contact the Telehealth Technical Support Team (Telehealth Concierge Service) directly at the phone number and email address below. Additionally, you will receive a technical readiness call from the Telehealth Concierge Service the day prior to your scheduled telehealth visit.

• Telehealth Concierge Services	855-644-6445
• Telehealth Support Email	NIHCCPatientPortal@mail.nih.gov

14. What if I need an interpreter?

Interpreter services are available just as they are for onsite visits. Your provider will work with the Telehealth Concierge Service to ensure an interpreter is included for your telehealth visit if needed.

15. What can I do to improve the quality of my telehealth connection?

Test your internet connection speed. Google provides an easy way to test your internet connection directly from the Google homepage. Simply search in Google: “internet speed test.” Click the blue button that says **Run Speed Test**.

Close other programs. Closing programs running in the background will almost certainly improve the quality. Also, make sure you’re not downloading any large files.

If your Wi-Fi isn’t optimal, we recommend using a wired Ethernet connection instead of Wi-Fi. Wired internet offers a smoother, more consistent experience.

16. What if I lose my connection during my telehealth visit? Can I rejoin the visit using the same link that was provided to me initially?

Yes. Rejoin the visit using the same link provided in the information that was emailed to you by the Telehealth Concierge Service.

17. What if I can’t connect to the appointment or the technology isn’t working?

If you’re having trouble connecting to the appointment, reach out to our Telehealth Concierge Service at 855-644-6445 or NIHCCPatientPortal@mail.nih.gov to troubleshoot the issue. Depending how long it takes to fix the problem, your appointment may need to be rescheduled.