

Virtual Care: Frequently Asked Questions

Many programs have started seeing patients regularly using video visits or telephone visits. These questions let you know what to expect if you have been scheduled for a virtual care appointment with your West Park Healthcare provider.

Q: What is a virtual care visit?

A: A virtual care visit is a healthcare appointment where you do not meet your healthcare provider in-person at West Park Healthcare Centre. Virtual care visits offered by West Park programs include telephone appointments, video visits, or secure messaging with your healthcare team.

Q: Why is West Park offering virtual care visits?

A: Virtual care visits reduce the need to travel to and from the hospital to receive healthcare. Virtual care visits bring safe and convenient healthcare directly to you or your family members. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual care visits can help you maintain physical distancing.

Q: Is virtual care safe? How do I know my privacy is being protected?

A: West park is taking numerous safety precautions to ensure that your privacy is protected during virtual care visits.

- Email is reserved for administrative tasks, such as booking healthcare appointments. No personal health information is shared via email without prior consent
- For telephone visits, your healthcare provider will call you from a private, secure telephone. Only your healthcare provider is present during your telephone appointment, unless you consent and wish to have others involved. Only your healthcare provider can access and update your protected health record.
- For video visits, your healthcare provider will use Zoom Healthcare or the Ontario Telehealth Network (OTN). Both video platforms are designed for use by healthcare providers and have additional security functions to protect your privacy. These security functions include waiting rooms to manage who can enter a virtual care visit, no tracking of video visits, preventing recordings of video visits, deleting chat activity, and transferring video traffic through secure Canadian data centres.

Q: How do I know if my healthcare provider is offering virtual care visits?

A: The program you attend or your healthcare provider will be in touch with you by telephone or email if they are offering virtual care visits. To stay informed, make sure your healthcare provider has your updated contact information. This includes your email address, phone number, and home address.

Q: How will my virtual visit appointment be booked?

A: Your healthcare provider will contact you by telephone or email to book your virtual visit appointment. If you have any questions about this booking process, contact your healthcare provider's office directly.

Q: What do I need for my virtual care visit?

A: For telephone appointments, you will need a telephone and a private environment. For a video visit or secure messaging, you will need an email address, a laptop, desktop, mobile phone, or tablet, and a private environment. Your electronic device will need a front-facing camera, a microphone, speakers or headphones and a reliable internet connection. Some devices might require specific software.

Your healthcare provider will provide you with:

- Information about what you will need for your virtual care visit
- Instructions for how to prepare for your virtual care visit
- Information about how to provide consent for your virtual care visit
- Details about the date, time, and how to attend your virtual care visit

Q: What can I expect during my virtual care visit?

A: A virtual care appointment is similar to an in-person healthcare appointment. Your healthcare provider will talk to you about your current health, the symptoms you are experiencing, and your needs. They will provide you with directions for care and follow up. If your provider determines that an in-person visit is needed instead of a virtual care visit, they will discuss your options and next steps.

Q: Can I decline a virtual care visit or change my mind?

Yes, you can decline or withdraw consent for virtual visits or electronic communication at any time by contacting your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will do their best to make sure that you still have access to timely and safe in-person care.

Q: Where can I learn more about virtual care visits?

- *Canadian Medical Association:* [Guide for Patients](#)
- *Ontario Telemedicine Network*
 - Website: <https://otn.ca/patients/evisit/>
 - Help: i) [Patient Guide for Video visits](#) ii) [Video guide for OTN virtual care visits](#)