

Virtual Appointments: Protecting Your Privacy

A Guide for Patients and Families

A virtual appointment is just like a regular appointment, except you will see and talk to us on a computer or phone by using the internet.

Planning Your Appointment

Availability: Send us a date and time that works for you so we can schedule the virtual appointment. If you need to reschedule, please let us know as soon as possible.

Guests: If you want a family member or friend to join your virtual appointment, please let us know beforehand. Send us their name(s), email address(es) and phone number(s) so we can invite them.

Privacy: If other people are attending the virtual appointment (e.g. family member or friend) and you don't want to discuss or share some of your personal health information with them, please tell us before the appointment.

Virtual Appointment Invitation: You will receive an email invitation for a specific date and time for your virtual appointment. Please reply to this email as soon as you can.

- To accept, click “Accept” or “Yes”
- To decline, click “Decline” or “No” and call us to make other arrangements.

Device Requirements

We use Microsoft Teams for our virtual appointments. To participate, you will need:

- Computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone with camera, speakers and microphone
- Strong and secure internet connection
- Email address
- Internet browser (**note:** do not use Internet Explorer)
- Battery/power supply

Note: If you are using a smartphone or tablet, download the Microsoft Teams app. Learn more about [hardware requirements](#) and [supported browsers](#) for Microsoft Teams.

Computer Security and Tips

Make sure your device has good security, like:

- Private and password protected Wi-Fi (i.e. not an open guest Wi-Fi connection)
- Strong password
- Device is up-to-date with security fixes, patches and antivirus software
- Device times out after 30 minutes of inactivity
- Files are encrypted/password protected
- Do not leave your device unattended when it's unlocked

On the Day of Your Appointment

Location: Find a quiet and private place where uninvited people can't see or overhear you. You may want to position your camera so it doesn't show personal or private items in your home.

Join the Appointment: Click on the "Join Microsoft Teams Meeting" link in the appointment invitation and wait to be admitted.

Getting Started: All participants will be asked to:

- identify themselves (note: patients will be asked to show their health card)
- not record the appointment
- not use the chat feature except for technical issues

Technical Difficulties: Have our phone number nearby so you can call us if you have technical difficulties. You can also use the chat feature in Microsoft Teams. Do not use the chat to share personal information or discuss your care.

Consent and Risk

We are committed to protecting your personal health information. However, communication and services over the internet involve privacy and security risks beyond our control. Your appointment invitation will include the terms, conditions and risks.

- If you accept the invitation, you are agreeing to the terms and conditions.
- If you do not consent, do not accept the invitation. Please call us to arrange another way to communicate.

Internet Based Communication: There is no guarantee of privacy and security with internet communications and online services.

Access to Information: Internet service providers may have a right to access and retain information that passes through their systems. Even after this information is deleted, it may still exist on back-up systems.

Information Integrity: Someone with access to your information and email may try to impersonate you and communicate with us. We may not be able to detect this type of fraud.

Suspicious Messages: You could receive communication that appears to be from us but is not. If you have any doubts, do not open the message and call us.

Security: If there is a security breach, your information could be obtained by third parties.

Reliability: Online services and software may not work as intended due to circumstances beyond our control.

Liability: We will not be liable for consequences from communication over the internet or online services and software we make available.

Other Important Information

Emergencies: Do not use virtual appointments for medical emergencies or time sensitive matters.

Email: Do not email or text any personal health information. If you want to communicate by email, we require written consent first. Ask us for further details. Let us know if your email address changes.

Inviting Others: If you invite other people to attend your virtual appointment, please ensure they accept the risks and terms.