

# Virtual care overview



Virtual care connects patients and families to healthcare providers when they can't be in the same location. As a patient, a virtual visit allows you to meet with your provider from your home.

If you and your healthcare provider decide virtual care is the right option for your next visit, you will need a few things to prepare for your virtual visit:

- A computer (webcam, speaker, and microphone), tablet, or smartphone
- A secure and reliable internet connection
- An email address or MyAHS Connect account.

Let your healthcare provider know if you do not have these items. Some services are not possible with virtual care. Virtual care doesn't replace the care given at urgent centres or emergency departments. If you have questions, please contact your healthcare provider or call Health Link at 811 for health advice any time.



**At any time, you can decide you do not want a virtual visit. Ask your healthcare provider about other choices.**

## Tips for a good appointment



Consider having a family member or caregiver present



Join the visit from a place where you can focus, such as your home



Do not drive during a virtual visit



Choose a well-lit, private space where you can talk freely



Remove distractions and plan the visit around other activities



Position your camera at eye level



Make sure your device is fully charged or plugged in



Sign in 5 to 10 minutes early in case you have technical issues



Speak at a normal volume. Adjust volume if you cannot hear your healthcare provider



To avoid data charges, use a wired connection to the internet or secure Wi-Fi.

## Other items to have available

- Your Alberta Personal Healthcare Card
- List of medications, vitamins and supplements
- Name and location of your pharmacy
- Notes on your medical history and symptoms
- List of any questions you want to ask
- Pen and paper to write down notes
- Phone number of healthcare provider or clinic

## During your virtual visit

- Your healthcare provider will introduce anyone on their end of the video call, and you will be asked to do the same
- You will be asked your current location and phone number in case of a health emergency or if the virtual visit is disconnected
- Ask questions and talk about your needs and goals just like an in-person visit
- Make a care plan with your healthcare provider:
  - How to manage your symptoms
  - Referrals for blood work, tests, prescriptions, other programs, or healthcare providers
  - When to book your next appointment
  - What to do if your symptoms get worse

## Are virtual visits secure?

Your privacy is important to us. Our applications comply with federal and provincial privacy laws. Audio and video are encrypted and security best practices are followed.

- Your healthcare provider will confirm your email address in order to send you the video meeting link
- Virtual visits are not recorded.

Perfect security does not exist. We can't control what happens to information once it's stored:

- On your device
- By telecommunications providers
- By software or application providers.

## How can you make your virtual visit more secure?

Use safe online practices, including:



Use secure, password-protected Wi-Fi, not public Wi-Fi



Use up-to-date anti-malware and anti-virus software



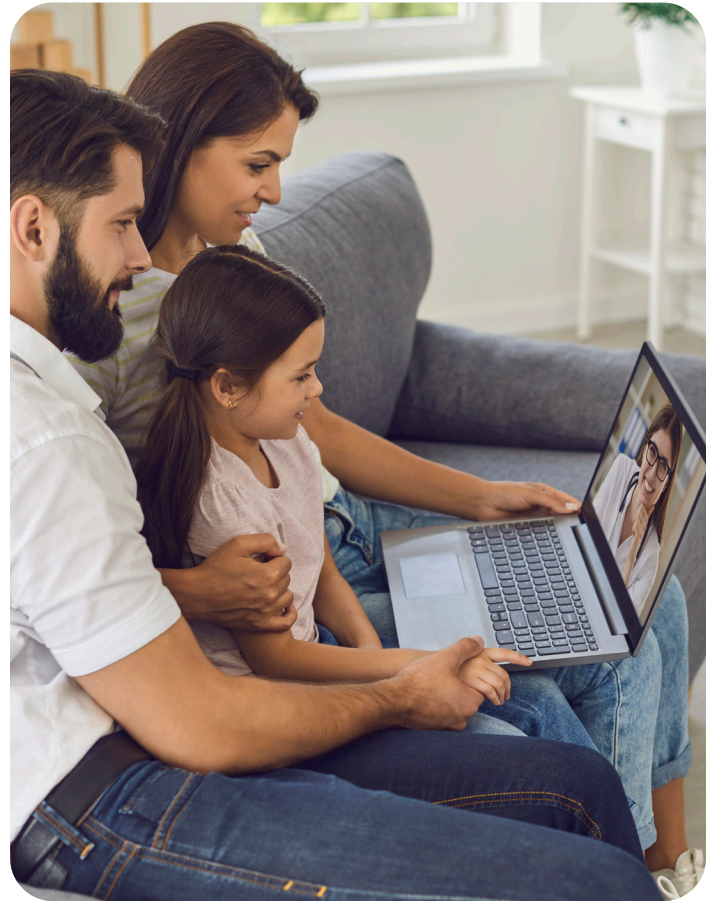
Download applications from trusted sources only



Ensure your device is updated



Be aware of permission settings, installed programs and software on your device



## Is there a cost for virtual visits?

AHS does not charge extra fees for virtual care, but you could receive service charges when using your own equipment. AHS is not responsible for these costs.

## Can new prescriptions or refills be given during a virtual visit?

During a virtual visit, your healthcare provider might ask you to take a new medicine or refill your other medications. Have your pharmacy name and location ready so they can contact your pharmacy.



**Questions? Please contact your healthcare provider or phone Health Link at 811 for health advice at any time.**

**More information about virtual visits can be found on the Virtual Health page at [ahs.ca](https://www.ahs.ca)**

