

Everything that you need to know about "Virtual"/telemedicine visits....

Dear Patients -

Welcome to the Zombie Apocalypse! We're all learning to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic and holding "virtual" office visits is an option available to us for patient safety. "Virtual" visits, as you have guessed, means that we will talk via technology instead of in-person. This can be by video or simple telephone. We'll note that video conferences are better than phone calls because we not only can see each others' facial expressions, but you might be able to demonstrate the exact anatomical part that hurts (or has a rash), for example.

Regarding virtual meetings:

If using Zoom Video, we'll send you an invitation via e-mail that is unique only to yourself. Click on it to take you to the meeting (or possibly a virtual waiting room, if I'm still with another patient). It's possible that your computer needs to download the Zoom Video program. No worries - it's fast and it's free.

If using Skype or Facetime (you most likely already have one of either downloaded on to either your phone or computer), we'll contact you at the phone number or e-mail that you designated to us.

If you do not have access to a computer, no worries, we've still got Ma Bell (does she really exist any more? Just wondering...)

Before you start:

Please go to <https://www.onpatient.com/login/> anytime up to at least 15 minutes before your scheduled call. This will allow you to check in for your office visit and read/sign the required HIPAA Telemedicine consent form (Scroll down to the bottom of the screen for these). It will also give you an opportunity to update information (such as name of pharmacy), should you desire. [Incidentally, OnPatient.com works best with the Chrome browser, so if things seem glitchy, try changing to Chrome.]

If you've forgotten that pesky password you can reset it with the [I forgot my password](#) button. If you do not see the email from onpatient.com to reset your password, please check your spam email folder. If you are still having troubles, call us and Laurie will return your call and help walk you through it.

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About Payment:

Laurie will take your credit card info from you at the time that you schedule. Nothing will be charged until after the visit has taken place (and we do NOT store anybody's numbers, for your protection). We will still directly bill Medicare and Tricare for those patients (but a co-pay may be required).

The government has advised insurance companies that they are to reimburse patients for telemedicine visits the same as they do for genuine office visits. To facilitate reimbursement from your insurance company (if applicable), we will post copy of the visit "superbill/invoice" to the OnPatient portal for you to download.

Telemedicine visit charges remain based upon the combination of time and complexity. Basically:

- a simple fast problem visit will be charged \$60 (for established patients; \$70 for a new patient initial visit); This might be simple medication renewal.

[As an FYI - while a medication renewal might seem simple on the "front end," if we're dealing with controlled substances, there is "backend" work that we must do to satisfy DEA requirements and this takes time. We don't like having to do this, but it's a fact of life for us. It must be done every time that we prescribe a controlled substance. So please be aware that a few minute conference requires more time on our end.]

- an expanded problem visit (with just a few issues) will be charged \$100 (for established patients; \$110 for new patient initial visit);

- a detailed problem (lots to discuss, perhaps a half hour visit) will be charged \$150; [I can't imagine anybody going beyond a half hour visit.]

- a new patient consultation for hormone replacement therapy will be charged \$150.

We're doing our best to make this a fairly straightforward and reasonable solution to the times. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us thru the office at 760-688-0411 or thru the patient portal.

Stay safe and WASH YOUR HANDS!!!

Jeff and Laurie Pearson