



Virtual Visits



PATIENT GUIDEBOOK



[Hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/virtualcare](https://hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/virtualcare)



Patient Guidebook

Purpose

This guidebook will provide an overview of Virtual Care visits at Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) for patients. It includes all relevant information and resources to prepare for your virtual visit.

We've adapted this information from numerous sources, in partnership with the HHS Patient Experience department, and our Patient & Family Advisors.

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Version Control

Version	Date	Approved By	Intent
1.0	Dec. 9, 2020	Manager, Virtual Care	Initial Guidebook
1.1	Apr. 6, 2021	Manager, Virtual Care	Updated content – patient metrics, benefits of virtual care, contact information
2.0	Apr. 20, 2022	Manager, Virtual Care	Updated for upcoming implementation of the new hospital electronic medical record, Epic



Glossary of Terms

HHS: Hamilton Health Sciences

Virtual Visit or Virtual Appointment: A meeting with your doctor or healthcare team that does not involve an in-person visit at the hospital or clinic (typically completed via telephone or video call)

Epic: Epic is Hamilton Health Sciences' new hospital information system. It is fully electronic, with patient records available in one central place.

MyChart: MyChart is a secure portal within Epic that allows our patients to have access to their medical information including upcoming appointments and results. For a more comprehensive list of the benefits of enrolling MyChart, please see the [MyChart Benefits section](#).

MyChart® is a registered trademark of Epic Systems Corporation.

Zoom Healthcare: A video conferencing service that allows you to have video appointments. Zoom Healthcare has added security and privacy features that differ from the traditional Zoom platform you may be used to using with friends and family. Zoom Healthcare is now integrated into our electronic medical record, Epic.



What is Virtual Care?

Virtual Care is a health care delivery model that enables our patients to access high quality care outside of the hospital environment. This is achieved through the use of technology or other forms of communication.

As part of this delivery model, you have virtual visits: appointments with your doctor or health care team that do not involve an in-person visit.

► There are two types of virtual visits:



- **A phone visit**, where you speak with your doctor/healthcare team using a telephone or smartphone.



- **A video visit**, where you see your doctor/healthcare team using a secure video on a smartphone, computer or other personal device with a microphone and camera. If you have a video visit booked, the platform will be Zoom Healthcare.

What happens during a virtual visit?

Just like an in-person visit, the healthcare team will talk with you about your health. You may also discuss medication(s) and next steps in your care plan. If the healthcare team feels that an in-person visit at the hospital would be a better fit, they will discuss your options and plan next steps.

What are the benefits of a virtual visit?

HHS offers virtual visits to provide high quality, safe care to our patients and families outside of the hospital environment. Patients have shared that virtual visits reduce or eliminate travel times, wait times, costs (e.g. parking) associated with on-site visits, and risks of exposure to illness or infection. Many patients express that virtual visits make it easier for them to access to their health care providers, since they can speak to their health care team from the comfort of their own home. In addition, virtual visits can also make it easier for families and caregivers to accompany patients to appointments, or allow for easy access to supports such as translators.

 Patients	>85% Positive patient satisfaction with virtual visits	 Reduces risk of infection	 Saves patients time & money	 Consistent satisfaction across patient age demographics
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Sources: CMA, 2021; HHS patient surveys, 2021; Advisory Board, 2021.



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How is a virtual visit booked?

A member of your healthcare team will call and inform you that the appointment will be virtual, and talk about options for virtual care.

As part of the booking process a member of your healthcare team will:

- Provide an overview of Virtual Care at HHS
- Ask for your verbal consent for the upcoming appointment
- Let you know the day and time of the virtual visit
- Confirm they have your preferred contact information.

The decision on which type of virtual visit you have will be made based on your care needs and the technology you and the clinic have access to.

MyChart Benefits

When your virtual visit is booked, you will be asked if you would like to enroll in MyChart within Epic.



► MyChart gives you as a patient access to your health information. It includes a range of features including:

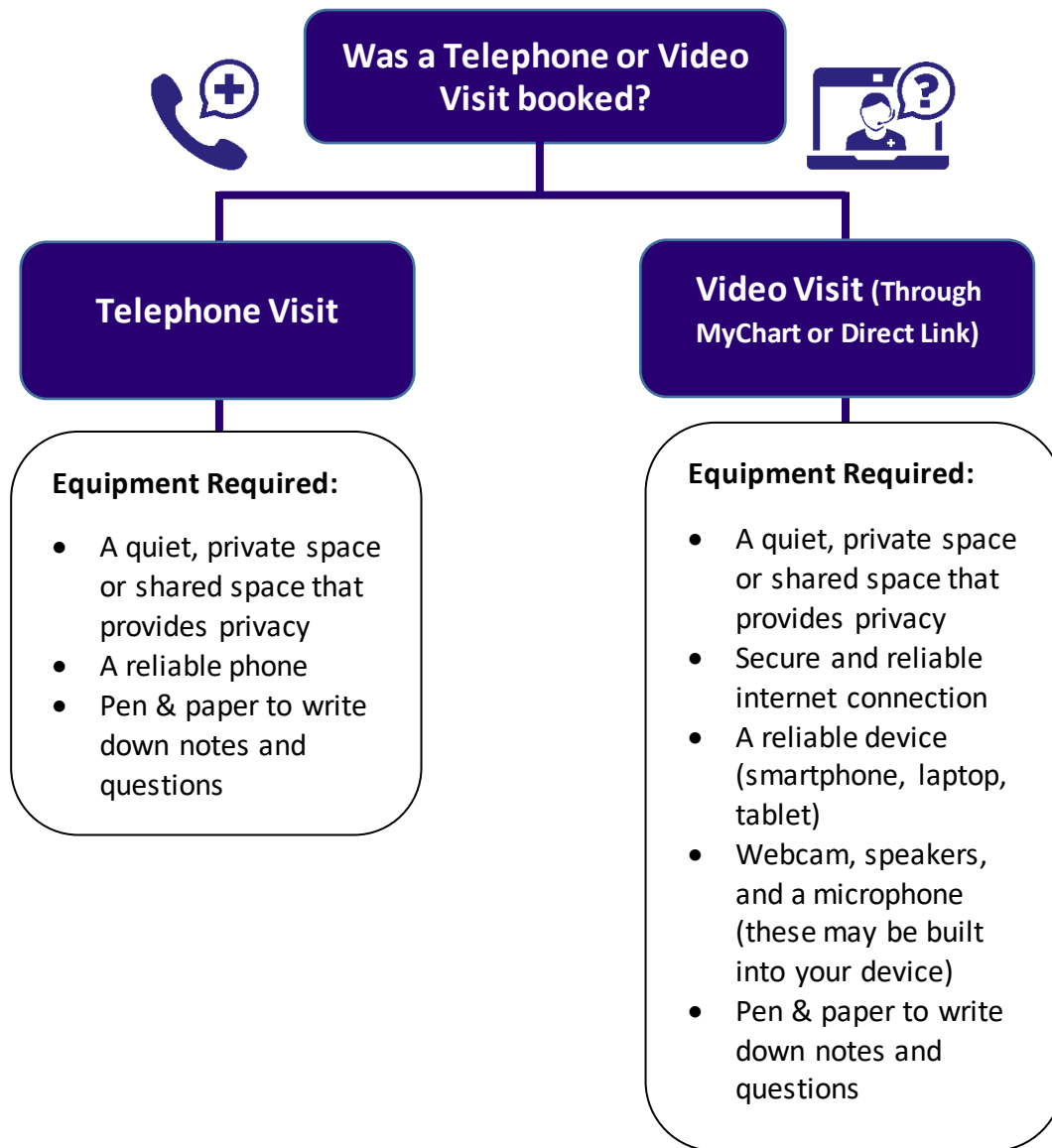
- **eCheck-in:** This allows patients to update information such as an address or contact info, medications, allergies, health coverage, and complete questionnaires prior to their HHS appointment. The purpose is to shorten the length of time a patient is at registration.
- **Video Visits:** Scheduled video visits with doctors, nurses and other health-care professionals already take place across HHS – MyChart will make it even easier, with all the info and access in one place.
- **Notes and Results:** Patients can view test results and medical notes from their health-care team. Test and lab results include: CT scans, MRIs, x-rays, ultrasounds, echocardiograms, pathology results and lab results such as blood work and COVID testing.
- **Patient-Entered Flowsheets:** With these forms, patients can enter medical data, like a blood pressure reading or blood sugar level. The data can be trended over time and can be included in their chart. Abnormal readings can also trigger a message to the health-care provider to follow-up with the patient.

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Preparing for a virtual visit

Required equipment for the visit



Sources:

"Conquer Silence: CPSI." Virtual Care Resources for Members of the Public, www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/en/Events/Conquer-Silence/Pages/Virtual-care-resources-for-members-of-the-public.aspx.

"How to Navigate a Virtual Care Visit: Patient Guide." Canadian Medical Association, www.cma.ca/how-navigate-virtual-care-visit-patient-guide.



Tips to prepare for your visit

Location

Private, comfortable, free of distraction and brightly lit.

Equipment

Fully charged or plugged in with a stable internet connection. Test your computer, smartphone or tablet to ensure audio and/or video are working.

Materials

Have your health card and list of medications ready. A pen and paper to write down information and instructions.

Support

Consider having a family member, caregiver or friend with you during the visit to help with translation, technology or understanding information.

Devices

Have assistive devices – glasses, hearing aids, and any other devices required ready.

Sources:

“Conquer Silence: CPSI.” Virtual Care Resources for Members of the Public, www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/en/Events/Conquer-Silence/Pages/Virtual-care-resources-for-members-of-the-public.aspx.

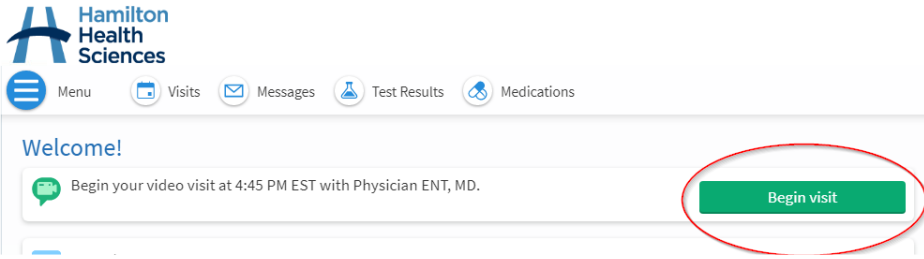
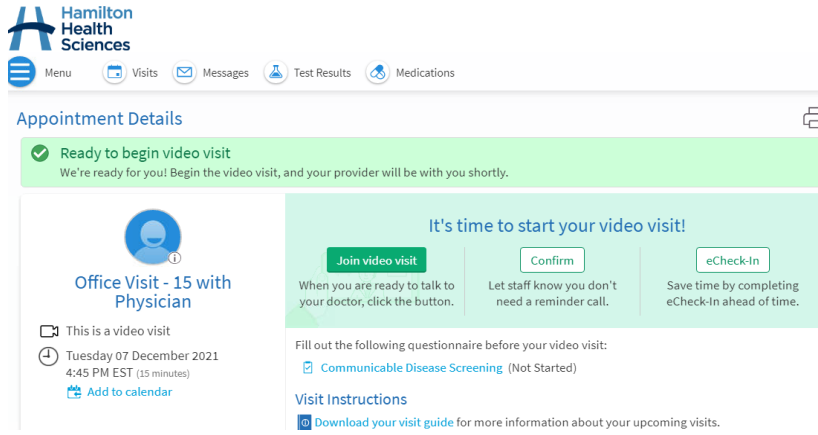
“How to Navigate a Virtual Care Visit: Patient Guide.” Canadian Medical Association, www.cma.ca/how-navigate-virtual-care-visit-patient-guide.



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Virtual Video Visit using MyChart



PREPARE	
a) MyChart eCheck-In	When you enroll in MyChart, you will have access to your upcoming appointment information. You will also receive an appointment reminder 7 days prior to your appointment. At this point, you can also complete eCheck-in , which allows you to update your demographic information such as your address or phone number.
b) Equipment	If you plan to use a computer or tablet , please ensure your microphone and speakers are working If you plan to use a smartphone , ensure you have downloaded the zoom app. Prior to your visit you can 'test' your equipment to make sure you are ready for your visit.
JOIN	
c) MyChart log-in	<p>15 minutes prior to your virtual visit, log into your MyChart account. Your appointment details will appear. Click "Begin visit" – this will take you inside of the Appointment Details window.</p> 
d) Join virtual visit	<p>Once inside the Appointment Details, select "Join video visit" to connect to the Zoom</p> 
If you are unable to join and did not receive a phone call from your health care provider, please contact your health care provider's office.	

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Virtual Video Visit not Using MyChart

***Note:** if you do not enroll in MyChart, you will not receive a link to your video visit until at least 7 days prior to the appointment.

JOINING A DIRECT-LINK ZOOM HEALTHCARE VISIT	
a) Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you plan to use a computer or tablet, please ensure your microphone and speakers are working• If you plan to use a smartphone or tablet, ensure you have downloaded the Zoom app
b) E-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Between 1 and 7 days prior to your appointment, you will receive an e-mail from your health care provider noreply@hhsc.ca with a link to join a secure video conference at the scheduled date and time. Click “Join Video Visit” <p>You have been invited to join a video visit. Please click the button below to join on 27/04/22 at 3:45 PM. Please do not share this link with anyone else--it is for your use only and won't work for anyone else.</p> <div>Join Video Visit</div>
If you are unable to join and did not receive a phone call from your health care provider, please contact your health care provider's office.	



Protecting your privacy during virtual visits

Your privacy is very important to us. We protect your privacy during a virtual visit in the same way as we do during a clinic visit.

This means:

- Only the people providing care to you will be present during your appointment – unless you are part of a group care session, in which case other members of the group session will also be part of the appointment.
- Discussion during the visit will be documented in your health record, just like an in-person appointment would be.
- Calls and videos are not recorded.
- Zoom Healthcare is used by many hospitals in Ontario and Canada and has been reviewed by our Privacy and Information Security teams. We are taking appropriate precautions to make sure your information is as safe and secure as possible. However, there are risks to electronic communication.

We suggest that you take similar steps to protect your own privacy.

This means:

- Being aware of your surroundings and who may be able to overhear your virtual visit.
- We suggest that you use your personal email when communicating about your health and not a work email address, as your employer may have the right to inspect your work email
- Use a secure internet connection. If using a public internet connection such as at the airport internet café, public library or other open area, there is a risk that others may be able to use the link to listen in on your appointment without you knowing.

HHS is not responsible for the security of patients' internet service providers, e-mail domains, personal devices or personal computers.

Virtual Group Visits

- If you are participating in a virtual group session, it is important to be mindful of the privacy of other group members as all participants can be seen and heard by others joining the virtual group visit.
- Participate in the session from a private spot in your home where others cannot see/hear the session.
- The use of headphones is recommended.
- Virtual Group Visits via MyChart will only be available on video, and not telephone.



Contact Information

HHS Support:

If you have **questions** about your virtual appointment (e.g., technology, process, booking appointments), please contact your clinical team.

If you have **feedback** about your virtual appointment experience, you may get in touch with the Patient Experience Office:

- **Telephone:** 905-521-2100 ext. 75240 (Please leave a brief message and your call will be returned as soon as possible)
- **E-mail:** patientexperience@hhsc.ca