

**TALLAHASSEE SENIOR CENTER
SENIOR RESOURCE INFORMATION**

TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR YOUR TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENT

Telehealth has become more common because of the need for physically distancing due to COVID-19. Patients can connect with their health care providers by phone, video, and other technologies, allowing providers to share information with patients in real time and monitor their progress with recommended treatments. It is important to prepare for your appointment in advance to make the most of your telehealth visit.

Preparing for A Telehealth Appointment

- **Write down all your questions**

It is natural for a healthcare appointment to make you a little nervous, so you may forget to ask important questions during your visit. It is suggested that you make a list of your questions ahead of the appointment to be ready. Refer to your list throughout the appointment and record your provider's responses.

- **Write down any symptoms you are having**

If you are sick, the provider will need to know as much information as possible. Make a list of your symptoms, how long each one has been present, and any other details you can. For example, if you have a fever you will want to share how high it got and if you used anything to lower it. If you have a visible symptom, such as a rash, take a picture or be prepared to show the rash to the provider over the video, if possible.

- **Measure your numbers**

If you have a thermometer, bathroom scale, blood pressure cuff, pulse oximeter, or other device, take measurements the day of the appointment and write them down with the time they were taken. Have your devices ready and nearby in case the provider asks you to measure again while you are having your telehealth visit.

- **Gather your medications**

At every visit it is important to review all the medications you are taking and how you use them. Have each of your medicines next to you during the visit so you will be able to answer any questions the provider may have. Include your prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal therapies, and supplements. Gather all forms of medicine such as pills, eye drops, and skin creams. For each medication, know the name, amount, and how often you use it. It can be helpful to have a magnifying glass nearby so you can read labels. Your provider may want to know the name of the pharmacy, how many refills, and other details on the medicine container.

- **Keep a list of your medical conditions**

During your visit, your provider may ask about pre-existing conditions. Be prepared to share if anything has changed about your medical conditions and if you have seen any other providers or started any new therapies, including medications.

- **Choose a private location**
Before your appointment choose a room at home for your healthcare meeting and ask your family or roommates to respect your privacy to minimize being interrupted. A quiet, comfortable, well-lit place with few distractions and as little noise as possible is ideal. Turn off the television or radio. Have enough light so the provider can see your face clearly.
- **Consider technical aspects**
You may be using your phone, computer, or tablet for your meeting. Practice using the audio or video chat software beforehand and make sure your equipment is fully charged or plugged in. Using headphones or earbuds may make it easier to hear and will improve privacy. Just before the visit, make sure your device is turned on, the video is working, the audio is turned up, and you have good internet connection if needed. Be patient during the call because sometimes there is a lag time and the screen may freeze, but often resolves quickly. If you are disconnected, know that the provider will try to get back in touch with you as quickly as possible.
- **Write down your treatment plan**
Sometimes the plan will be easy, “drink plenty of fluids and get some rest.” Other times, you may need a new medication, need to make an appointment to see another doctor, or have some blood tests done. If possible, take notes on the treatment plan and what your next steps are during the appointment.
- **Be ready for an in-person follow-up appointment**
Telehealth visits can be very useful, but there are some cases where an in-person visit is needed. If you are asked to make an in-person visit, make sure you bring your notes from your telehealth appointment and your medications with you.

Tips for Preparing for Your Telehealth Appointment provided by [REACH.med.fsu.edu](https://reach.med.fsu.edu).

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