Telehealth is the use of technology such as computers and mobile devices to help you get health care anywhere and anytime.

You can talk directly with a board-certified doctor through the phone, or video to help with minor, non-life-threatening conditions. When medically necessary, they can have prescriptions sent directly to your local pharmacy. Current medical literature demonstrates that the trajectory of healthcare delivery through telehealth tools is not a trend and is here to stay.

The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) gave the green light to telehealth, and a virtual explosion in usership ensued. Institutions such as Nemours Children’s Health System, Massachusetts General Hospital, and NYU Langone have documented a huge surge in virtual visits compared to pre-COVID19. State authorities and local governments urged patients to utilize telemedicine instead of seeking traditional care at doctor’s offices, clinics, and hospitals to quell the spread of the virus.

The key benefit of telehealth during the COVID19 pandemic has been the providers’ ability to maintain the continuity of care for patients with chronic diseases. It has also allowed providers to assess if patient with acute diagnosis can be medically managed in their home or if they need to be brought in for further testing and evaluation.

Make the Most Out of Your Appointment
To get the most out of a remote visit with your doctor or health care provider, ideally you should have the following:

- A telephone line.
- A high-speed internet connection.
- Video access through a smartphone, tablet, or computer.
- Any app used by your provider to connect, which should be downloaded beforehand.

What Services Can Be Provided Via Telehealth?
Noncritical visits that don’t rely heavily on detailed physical exams or in-office diagnostic testing. The list includes allergies, colds and flu, fever, headaches, rashes, sore throats, stomach pain, urinary tract infections, and more.

Follow up visits for chronic conditions and medication management for conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Behavioral Health Services. Mental health services and counseling are usually talk-based. They typically require no hands-on care from the provider, making these services especially well-suited to remote delivery.

Rural Specialty Care. Patients who live in a rural area can access specialists at large urban institutions after their primary care physician provides an assessment.
Preparing for a Telehealth Visit

Make sure your paperwork is filled out in advance; this includes insurance information and health history. Have the information on hand that your doctor will need depending on what type of visit. For example, if you have an appointment for diabetes management, make sure to forward your doctor your blood sugar record before the call. If you have a skin rash, abrasion, or cut, take a picture so that the doctor can more closely examine as part of your appointment.

Make a list of any symptoms you have and prepare a list of questions. Have a list of the current medications you are taking or the actual prescription bottles, so there is no mistaking what you are taking and the dosage.

Check with your insurance company. Many rules surrounding telehealth have changed rapidly. It’s best to double-check ahead of time with your health insurance provider that the service you’re seeking to receive via a telehealth visit will be covered.

Prior to the appointment, double-check your equipment. Check to make sure that your equipment is optimized. Check that the volume is up, and camera access has been granted to the appropriate application before the call starts. Have a pen and paper ready to jot down recommendations the provider might have.

Think about the setting. Do your best to find a quiet, well-lit corner to have your visit. Do not sit outside as noise and lighting can interfere with the quality of video and sound. Avoid sitting in front of a bright window as well.

Consider having someone else join you. Depending on the type of visit you’ll be having, and what will be discussed, it might be helpful to have a family member sit in on the call with you. They can help take notes or to raise other concerns with the provider if you forget something.

Focus on the session. Just as you would during an office visit, eliminate distractions and interruptions during the virtual visit and give your provider your undivided attention. Shut off notifications on your cell phone and shut down apps that might create distractions or noise.

Referenced
https://health.usnews.com/conditions/articles/a-beginners-guide-to-a-virtual-doctors-visit

© 2020 ConnectCare3, LLC - All Rights Reserved