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Telehealth FAQs

What is telehealth?

Telehealth involves the use of electronic communications to enable health care providers at different locations to share individual patient medical information for the purpose of improving patient care. The information may be used for diagnosis, therapy, follow-up and/or education, and may include any of the following:

- Patient medical records
- Medical images
- Live two-way audio and video or audio only
- Output data from medical devices and sound and video files

Is telehealth safe?

Telehealth providers are required to take steps to protect your healthcare data. They take physical safeguarding steps to ensure no one overhears or has access to your data at their location. Electronic systems used incorporate network and software security protocols to protect the confidentiality of patient identification and imaging data and will include measures to safeguard the data and to ensure its integrity against intentional or unintentional corruption.

What are the expected benefits of telehealth?

- Improved access to medical care.
- More efficient medical evaluation and management.
- Obtaining expertise of a distant specialist.
- Reduced exposure to COVID and other communicable disease.
- Convenience of attaining medical care at your home or other private location of your choosing.

What are the possible risks of telehealth?

As with any medical procedure, there are potential risks associated with the use of telehealth. These risks include, but may not be limited to:

- In rare cases, information transmitted may not be sufficient (e.g. poor resolution of images) to allow for appropriate medical decision making.
- Delays in medical evaluation and treatment could occur due to deficiencies or failures of the equipment or connection.
- In very rare instances, security protocols could fail, causing a breach of privacy of personal medical information.
- In rare cases and when medication is part of treatment, a lack of access to complete medical records may result in adverse drug interactions or allergic reactions or other judgment errors.

What is required of the patient for telehealth?

- A private, quiet space for the appointment where the patient/patients are alone.
 - Recommend a stationary location (i.e., not driving/riding in a vehicle) as the patient's physical location must be documented for each session.
- Internet connection or service; recommend a secure connection.
- A device with a webcam. Audio only/phone sessions available during COVID.
- Recommend practicing the technology used prior to appointment to prevent delay in care. Download any necessary apps and check audio and video.
- Upload or input demographic data, insurance and payment information, and requested background information prior to your appointment.
- Ensure that contact information and emergency contact data remain up to date and accurate.
- Minimize distractions by arranging childcare, keeping appointment space private, and silencing devices.
- Log in at the time of the appointment.
- Attempt to maintain eye contact and keep camera viewable to patient's face.