



Health

Getting the most from remote health appointments

How do virtual appointments work? If you have an online consultation coming up – whether it's an online GP appointment, phone physiotherapy or a video consultation with a specialist or practitioner – you might be wondering what's involved.

This guide has some tips for being ready and getting the most from your virtual consultation. Don't worry. Remote health appointments have been in use for many years, so your experienced consultant will be able to tell you what to do if you're unsure.



First, get comfortable

If you can, choose somewhere quiet and private for your appointment. Somewhere where you're unlikely to be disturbed. If you're likely to be interrupted just let your consultant or practitioner know. It's a good idea to log out of your work devices so you're not disturbed by a colleague at the time of your appointment.



Next, check your tech

Check you have plenty of battery on your phone, tablet or laptop. Make sure you have a good phone signal for telephone consultations and a strong internet connection for video consultations. Last but not least, check your camera and microphone are enabled before your appointment or your consultant won't be able to see or hear you.



Don't forget the basics

Technology is all very well but be sure to have a pen and paper ready so you can make notes during your appointment. It can be useful to refer to these afterwards if you want to go through things again or look something up. Some online services, like our AXA Doctor at Hand¹ online GP service, record the appointments for you. Also, if you're taking any medicine, have this handy so you can show your consultant the label and dosage.

¹AXA Doctor at Hand is powered by Doctor Care Anywhere.

Have your questions ready

Your consultant or practitioner will lead the conversation, but you'll get more from your appointment if you've thought through these questions:

- What's led to you making your appointment?
- How long have you had the symptoms?
- Have things steadily been getting worse or has it been sudden?
- Have you got any pre-existing conditions or significant medical history?
- What are you hoping to get from your appointment?

If you tell your consultant or practitioner what you're hoping for, even if they're not able to give it to you, they'll be able to explain why.

Share your thoughts

Do you have some thoughts about what's going on? Talking to the consultant about your ideas can help them confirm if you're right, reassure you, or explain why they think it's something different.

What next?

At the end of your consultation, make sure you're clear about what should happen next. And that you understand any advice that you've been given. If you're unsure, ask.