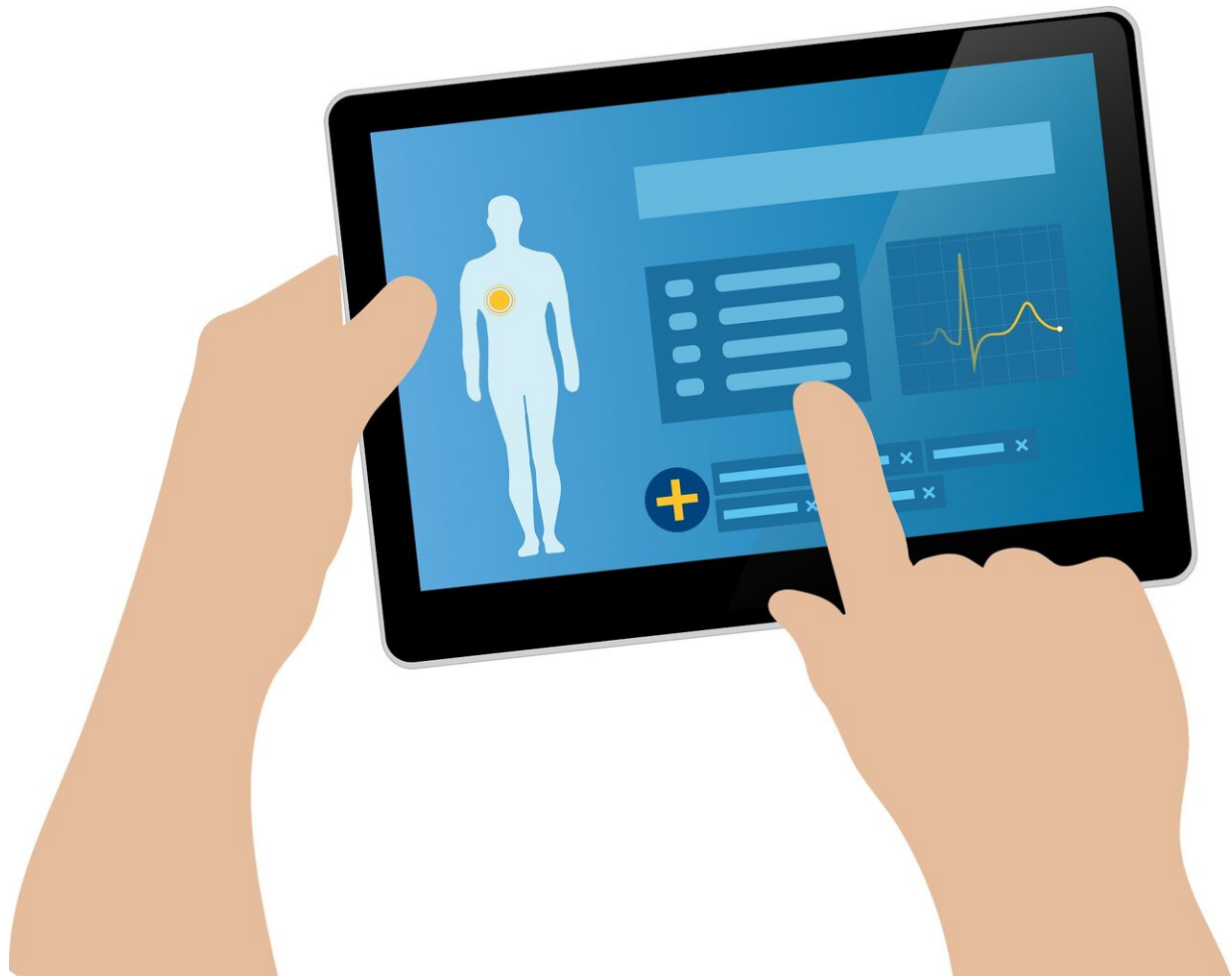


Four tips for maximizing virtual healthcare visits

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing recommendations have necessitated a change to the way health care is being delivered. Telehealth appointments—particularly video visits—are allowing providers see their patients when coming into the clinic isn't an option.

While video appointments have been used for several years by physicians for post-operative and [medical specialty](#) follow-up appointments, most [patients](#) have not experienced video-based visits.

"Understandably, many patients are nervous the first time they have a telehealth visit, especially if they are not comfortable with technology. But just like an in-person visit, there are things you can do to have a successful visit," says Dr. Tina Ardon, a Mayo Clinic family medicine physician.

Dr. Ardon offers her top four tips to maximize a video visit with your health care provider.

Understand how to connect with your provider. "We advise patients in advance about the software they may need to download. That way, if they have any difficulty they can connect with our IT folks to troubleshoot before the actual appointment," says Dr. Ardon.

Ensure your device is fully charged. Whether you use a cellphone, computer or tablet, Dr. Ardon says double check the battery before your appointment. "I've had a few patients who I've lost mid-visit because their battery died."

Find a quiet, well-lit space. "We conduct video visits in a patient exam room or a quiet office so that we are not distracted. You will also want to be in a place that will allow for a productive visit, which includes good lighting," says Dr. Ardon. "I can look at a patient and see for instance, if they look very sick, only kind of sick, short of breathe. So the better the

lighting, the more the provider can see."

Treat the video visit like any other appointment—but have patience. "Be on time and be prepared with the list of issues you want to discuss. But remember that technology is unpredictable sometimes so there may be glitches."

Dr. Ardon believes video visits will continue to grow in popularity. "Video is a valuable way for us to care for patients and limit exposure. I think we will likely see video consults become more popular even after the pandemic," she says.

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