

# Virtual Care

## Patient Information Guide

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Virtual care is any interaction between patients and a healthcare provider or team using approved virtual care technology (audio/video).

### Privacy and Confidentiality

- The virtual care technology used by Nova Scotia Health and IWK Health are private and secure.
- Virtual appointments/visits are not recorded. You will be asked to give informed written consent for any exception to this.
- Nova Scotia Health and IWK Health employees/staff take all reasonable steps to protect patient privacy and maintain confidentiality.
- Personal health information is protected under the [Personal Health Information Act](#) and in accordance with [Nova Scotia Health Privacy Statement](#) and [IWK Health Privacy, Confidentiality, and Access to Information](#). Only your healthcare provider will see your personal health information.

For more information:

- [Nova Scotia Health Privacy](#)
- [IWK Health Privacy](#)

### Benefits of using virtual care

- Provides an opportunity to access health care services wherever you are (e.g., home, work, hospital).
- Allows for 'Family Presence' (and others of your choosing) to attend your virtual appointment/ visit (e.g., family doctor, family, teacher, home care staff, social worker).
- Reduces the risk of exposure to infection or other illnesses.

### Risks of using virtual care

- Potential equipment or internet connection failure.
- In rare instances, health and security protocols could fail, causing a breach of privacy of personal health information.
- If you are using web-based technology there is potential for cellular data usage if using data instead of a wireless "Wi-Fi" connection. You are responsible for any charges related to your internet data usage.
- Confidential conversations could be unintentionally overheard.
- Someone could accidentally join your virtual appointment/visit.

At any time, you or your healthcare provider can end the virtual appointment/visit if there are concerns (e.g., privacy, not meeting intended need) and other options can be discussed. All clinical care-related questions will be answered by the healthcare provider during your appointment/visit.

At the end of your appointment/visit, you will be provided with follow-up details regarding your care.