

## Telehealth: Preparing for Your Visit

To make sure you get all of your healthcare needs met during your Telehealth visit, it is a good idea to prepare a few things ahead of time.

If your telehealth visit will use video, you will want to do a 'tech test'. That's when you test the camera, sound, and program or app you will be using to make sure everything works.

If your healthcare worker's office can't do the tech test with you, some programs or apps can be tested with a friend -  
to make sure you can **see** each other **and hear** each other. Don't forget to make sure the camera is in a spot where they can see your whole face!

It is also a good idea to prepare ahead of time what you want to **talk** to your healthcare worker about.

If you will have a support person with you for your Telehealth visit, you should prepare for the visit together, if possible.

This video uses a term called AAC. AAC stands for Augmentative & Alternative Communication, which is when a person uses communication aids, like a communication device, book, or board.

We all think about what we want to ask and say to our healthcare team before a visit. If you use AAC, you can prepare for your telehealth visit by deciding what words and sentences you need to have in your AAC system.

If you use a communication book or board, the words and sentences you need for your visit could be written down. If you use a communication device, you can pre-program those words or sentences. You can decide what you will say on your device and what you want your support person to say for you. You may also want to make a plan about what to do if your healthcare worker interrupts you or doesn't wait for you to finish your messages.

There are health forms online made for people who use AAC. You will find links to some of those forms posted with this video. Many of the forms have good information to help you get ready for a visit with your healthcare worker.

For example - you might need to tell your healthcare worker about your medical history - that's when you list any illnesses or surgeries you have already had - and medicine you take.

To talk about your health now, you can include symptoms, pain or discomfort in parts of your body, problems you are having with your thoughts or feelings, and medicine you might need.

Healthcare workers might want you to describe your symptoms in detail, so you may want to think of words to help describe pain, and thoughts, or feelings ahead of time. For example, a headache could be described as throbbing or sharp. Anxiety could be described as an emotional feeling, negative thoughts, tight chest, or shaky feeling. If you have pain, you might want to talk to your support person about a pain scale and decide on the level of your pain.

You can also get **questions** ready for your healthcare worker. For example, you might want to know when a planned procedure or test might happen, or for them to explain anything you don't understand.

If you use a communication device, there are some messages you could program that can help your healthcare worker support you better. Here are some ideas:

(recorded on a comm device + label and pic of message)

- I communicate with a communication device. Please be patient while I finish making my messages.
- Please talk to me, not my support person.
- Please slow down.
- Can you explain that more?
- Thanks for your time today. It was nice seeing you. Bye.

There are many possibilities for programming your device. You can decide what you like best. For more ideas on messages to program, click on the link posted with this video called "AAC Message Ideas"

Because Telehealth visits are over a phone, computer, or other device - communication devices can be harder to hear and understand. Slowing down the voice speed and programming sentences with commas and periods can help.

If your device still isn't loud enough once you've turned up the volume, you could use an extra speaker if you have one.

You know your body and brain best. Taking some time to prepare for your Telehealth visit can help your healthcare worker know what you need and that you are in charge of your health!

Now that you are ready to prepare for your Telehealth visit, you can watch our last video on Participating in your Telehealth visit - so you get what you need to stay healthy.

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