How to Prepare for a Virtual Meeting with Your Health Care Provider

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many health care providers have started speaking with patients by phone or video call, instead of having in-person appointments. Even hospital staff are starting to use technology to communicate with their patients. They are doing this as a way to maintain physical distancing, because the virus can easily be spread from one person to another.

If you have an appointment for a “virtual meeting” it’s important for you to be prepared. Before the meeting, collect the following information:

- Your symptoms and what you are worried about.
- Ongoing health issues, including pre-existing conditions (for example, diabetes or heart disease).
- Allergies to medications, foods, or environmental factors.
- A current medication list, including medication name, strength, and instructions.
  - Look for a summary of recently filled prescriptions from your pharmacy, if you don’t have a list.
  - Include any nonprescription and natural health products that you use regularly.
  - Tell your health care provider if you take your medications in a different way from the instructions on your prescription labels.
- Tests that have recently been done, such as blood work.
- Contact information for your doctor(s) and your pharmacy.
- Your telephone number and the name and telephone number of your key contact person.

Take this information with you if you go to the hospital. Bring all your medications in a clear resealable plastic bag. Carry a cell phone or other mobile device and its charging cable, in case hospital staff needs to set up a virtual meeting with you.

Virtual meetings can provide many benefits and they are a new reality in times of physical distancing. Ask for one to replace an in-person appointment. Partnering with your health care team, and having information ready, will help support a successful virtual meeting and safer care.