

# Telemedicine Checklist

In times of social distancing, telemedicine offers patients a safer alternative to an in-office visit. These virtual visits allow patients to reduce the risk of coming into contact with someone who is ill, while still receiving care with similar results. This guide will cover the basics of telemedicine, including the technical aspects, how to prepare and what to bring to your appointment.



## What is Telemedicine?

Telemedicine is a way for caregivers to evaluate, diagnose and treat patients in a virtual setting, usually over the phone or through a video-conferencing platform. Telemedicine is especially helpful for those who have difficulty getting to their doctor's office, eliminating the need for travel and allowing patients to be seen in the comfort of their own homes.

## Telemedicine Basics

If telemedicine is new to you, knowing what to expect or how to prepare can be confusing. Understanding things like how to dress, how to position your camera and what to have with you will help make your telemedicine visit go smoothly. Here are some helpful tips to get ready:

- Follow your doctor's instructions and get familiar with the platform ahead of time.
- Schedule your appointment for a time you know you're going to be home.
- Be mindful of sound and distraction—close your door, turn off your TV, put your pets in a different room, etc.
- Dress appropriately for your appointment. Wear comfortable clothes that allow you to move and make it easy to access various parts of your body that your doctor might want to evaluate.



## Tips for Camera Placement

- For the best light, sit near a natural light source, facing the light. Avoid sitting with the light at your back as it will interfere with the doctor seeing you.
- Test your lighting ahead of time by turning on your webcam and seeing what's in view. Some computers, like laptops, have a built-in web camera. Other computers might require you to purchase a separate web camera. Make sure you know which setup you have.
- Set up your web camera so your provider can see you up close, but leave some room behind you so you could move far enough away from the webcam for them to see your whole body if needed.
- If you can't use a computer with a webcam and you have to use your phone for a video call, make sure to prop the phone on a desk away from you. Try not to hold your phone in your hand as it will distract from the image.

## Preparing for Your Visit

Whether you're headed to an initial consult or a routine check-up with your headache specialist, here are some questions that doctors might ask you.

- How often do you experience attacks each month?
- How long do the attacks last?
- How do the attacks impair your ability to function normally?
- How do you treat the attacks (include prescription and over the counter medications) Do they help completely?

## What to “Bring” to Your Visit

- Your headache journal where you document your attack frequency and duration etc.
- A list of medicines you've taken and dosages (can be obtained from your pharmacy)
- Objectives for the meeting – what do you want to accomplish?
- Questions for your doctor
- Pen and paper



**Tip:** Include how long you took the medications for and why you stopped.

## First Meeting

- Notes about your medical history, including surgical procedures, hospitalizations and family history
- Imaging from previous scans or studies

**Tip:** If you can't forward the actual images before your visit, have access to the written results if possible.



## Neurologic Exam

If your physician intends on conducting a neurologic exam on your telemedicine appointment, they might ask you to bring the following items in addition to those listed above:

- Flashlight
- Thermometer
- Blood pressure monitor
- A spoon in ice

**Tip:** If you experience dizziness or problems with balance, it might be useful to have a family member present for your exam so they can supervise you and assist where needed so the exam goes smoothly.

The mission of the American Migraine Foundation is to mobilize a community for patient support and advocacy, as well as drive and support impactful research that translates into advances for patients with migraine and other disabling diseases that cause severe head pain. Visit [americanmigrainefoundation.org](https://americanmigrainefoundation.org) for more resources for people living with migraine and their supporters.

**American Migraine Foundation**

19 Mantua Rd. Mount Royal, NJ 08061 || P: 856.423.0043 || E: [amf@talley.com](mailto:amf@talley.com)