

PRINT-OSF OnCall virtual dermatology offers faster access to skin care

After months of dealing with red, itchy and scaly skin around her eyelids, Susan Scott of Groveland, Illinois decided it was time to stop trying to diagnose and treat the problem herself.

She turned to a new virtual dermatology service from OSF OnCall and within hours, she had a diagnosis and a prescription.

Since the beginning of the summer, Scott had itching and redness around her eyelids and tried to treat it with over-the-counter ointments and it did not clear up. A busy mom who was tied up with medical appointments for her children, Scott didn't want to take time away from work for what she viewed as a minor issue.

"I didn't want another appointment in my life and so I just figured I would treat myself ... It wasn't worth the time and effort to go see a doctor and so the virtual solution was a great solution for me," Scott shares.

Rather than scheduling an in-person appointment with a dermatologist, she went to her OSF MyChart account, found the virtual dermatology link and submitted information and photos about her condition.

The process took about five minutes, Scott says. She completed basic medical information, photographed the affected area and submitted the request for review.

Her experience came on Labor Day, when she happened to be home and had time to address the problem.

Received a diagnosis on Labor Day

"Much to my surprise, that same day, on Labor Day, I got an email back from a doctor telling me that the condition was eczema and that they had called in prescription to Walmart in Morton (her pharmacy) to pick up my ointment."

By the following weekend, the condition had cleared.

OSF OnCall Virtual Dermatology allows people to submit information about a skin concern and upload photos for review by a board-certified dermatologist. The patient receives a personalized treatment plan within three business days or less, and prescriptions may be provided when appropriate.

The digital option is available for common conditions including acne, eczema, rosacea, rashes, psoriasis, warts, hives, ringworm and pediatric skin concerns.

Susan Wolf, DNP, MBA, APRN, clinical director of digital care for OSF OnCall says skin issues can be uncomfortable, frustrating and sometimes embarrassing and yet the wait time for an in-person dermatology appointment was an average of five weeks.

"When we looked into dermatology access across the state, we were noticing at least a month to two months for a wait time for non-urgent concerns. We thought that wait time was too long, especially with frontline providers wanting answers, along with patients, sooner than later to determine if this is more benign or if this is more serious and concerning that we need to address sooner than later?"

Popular with all ages

Wolf says the virtual dermatology option has been helpful to people with transportation issues or limited access to providers in rural areas. And so far, it has a wide range of users.

"We're seeing anybody from one year or less up to 90 plus that are using the service. We're also noticing that family members are using the service for their loved ones as well, rather than just the patient themselves using the service."

That has included older adults who have complex medical conditions that otherwise would require emergency medical transport to get them to an appointment.

For Susan Scott, it was a revelation that OSF OnCall Virtual Dermatology lived up to its promise of being quick and easy.

"Filling out the form, providing my medical history, describing my condition and issues I was dealing with was quick and really didn't take much time at all. So, it really was as quick and easy as they say it is."

The care costs a flat \$60 self-pay fee and is not billed to insurance. Scott says she used an easy option.

"I was able to use my HSA (health savings account) card so that way it was somewhat discounted because I was using tax-free dollars to pay for the appointment so that was good."

The experience changed Susan Scott's view of how quickly a persistent skin problem could be addressed. She regrets letting her condition persist through the summer when she had an easy solution.

If a person's condition requires an in-person evaluation, the care team can help coordinate follow-up with an OSF primary care provider or specialist.

The virtual option is not appropriate for a changing mole, irregular borders or colors, full body skin exams or bleeding or non-healing lesions which often require a dermoscopy or biopsy.

Here is more information about [OSF OnCall virtual dermatology](#) services.