

## OSF HealthCare Offers Video Visits for Provider Appointments

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a new way of life for everyone. From grocery shopping to socializing, Americans have turned to online options to get what they need, whether it be a head of lettuce or time talking to a friend.

Now OSF HealthCare is offering a virtual option for doctor visits: provider video visits. A video visit allows patients to have a face-to-face appointment with their physician, without having to leave home.

“Patients, they’re savvy. They like to be on the cutting edge and we have to meet them where they’re at. Technology is something that’s everywhere, and I think we’re just trying to innovate and be creative in these strange times in order to continue to provide the care that we need,” said Dr. Terry Ho, an OSF HealthCare pediatrician.

While some medical care requires in-person appointments, many visits can be effective and convenient via video. Patients can use a smartphone, a laptop with a camera or a tablet with a camera to interact with their physician for follow-ups, medication management, behavioral health visits, or even non-acute illnesses and minor injuries.

Dr. Udit Verma, an OSF HealthCare primary care physician, has been facilitating video visits with great success.

Dr. Verma conducted a virtual exam with a patient suffering from lower back pain. He asked the patient to touch his toes and stretch to show his range of motion. Dr. Verma says he can get all the information he needs on screen, and still provide the quality care his patients expect.

“With these video visits what we have found is most of these examinations can be done remotely and they are almost as reproducible as an actual in person visit, so that really helps and you can come to a good conclusion. You can make a proper sound plan for the patient,” explained Dr. Verma.

Dr. Ho agrees, and adds he has gotten great feedback from patients and their families. To date, more than 10,000 video visits have been conducted throughout the OSF HealthCare Ministry, something he says doesn’t surprise him at all.

“I think the big thing is we can still provide that face-to-face encounter with them, just like we would in the office,” said Dr. Ho. “I mean, we can gather vitals, we can collect our histories, perform parts of the physical exam and also provide treatment plans directly to them. There is some reassurance to be had for a patient to be able to see our faces, and for us to be able to give them the information and the care that they need.”

Patients can schedule their own video visit with their provider, or their provider's office may suggest one. Prior to an appointment, patients will need an active OSF MyChart account. To sign up click [here](#) or go to [osfmychart.org](https://osfmychart.org).

Patients can also call their provider’s office directly to learn more about video visits and whether it is the best option for them.

## **Video visit tips for patients:**

- Find a quiet, private location with enough light.
- Consider using a headset for the best sound quality.
- Make sure your device is plugged in or charged with enough battery for the visit.
- Make sure your speakers are unmuted and also that your volume level is set appropriately. You can also adjust the volume at the bottom of the video visit window.
- Consider having someone present with you to hold/position camera if needed.
- It may also be helpful to have access to your insurance card and any medications.
- Plan to log into your video visit a few minutes before your scheduled appointment start time to begin the e-check in process.
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