



# **Virtual Healthcare**

## **A Patient Guide**



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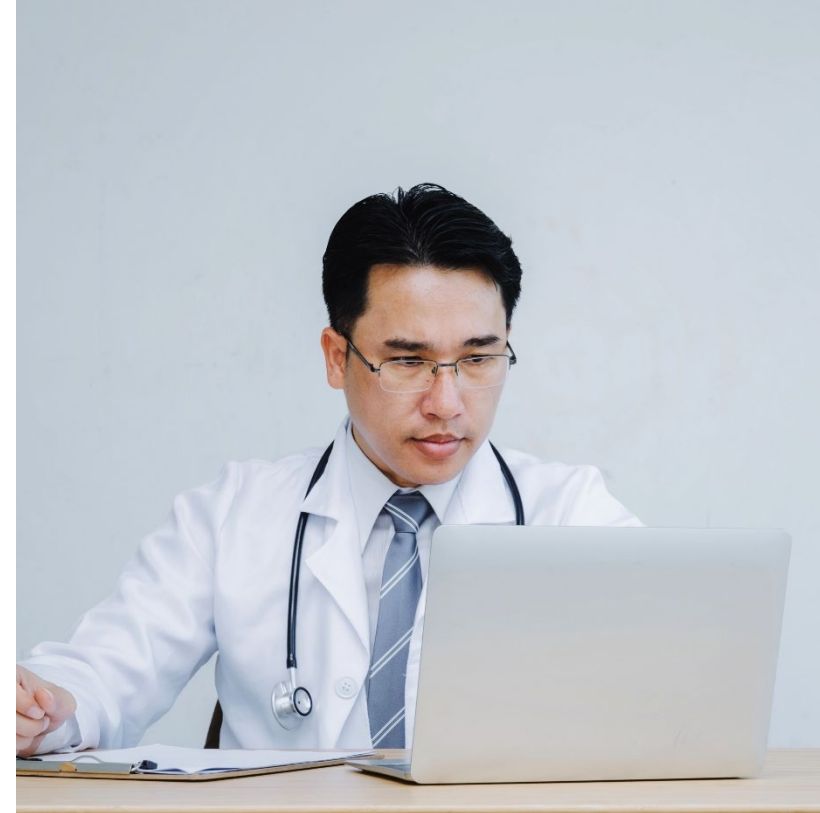


- Dr. Xenodemetropoulos is currently an Associate Professor in the Division of Gastroenterology, Department of Medicine at McMaster University, and is a consultant gastroenterologist at Hamilton Health Sciences.
- Dr. Xenodemetropoulos has clinical interests transcending the spectrum of luminal gastrointestinal, hepatic and pancreatic diseases.
- He also has academic and clinical interests in health information technology, and has been the Physician Lead in the development of a comprehensive telemedicine program for ambulatory clinics at Hamilton Health Sciences.
- He has established interests within medical education and is involved in a number of leadership and/or administrative roles related to medical education, clinical service delivery and quality improvement.

# Objectives

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- To define virtual care, and its importance during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Discuss patient preparation for virtual care
- Discuss how LifeLabs can help in supporting virtual care during the COVID-19 pandemic



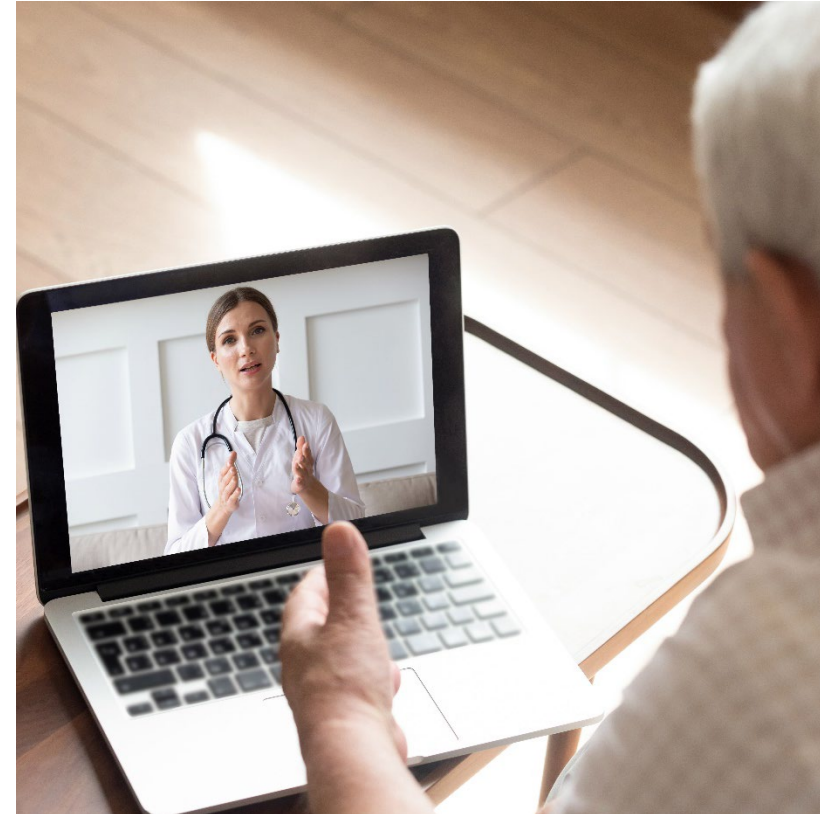


# Virtual Care

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## Definition:

- Any interaction between patients and/or members of their circle of health care, occurring remotely, using any forms of communication or information technologies with the aim of facilitating or maximizing the quality and effectiveness of patient care.



# Virtual Care

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- While these technologies have been around for decades, they had not been adopted into routine use by health care systems around the industrialized world.
- Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, interest in care delivery in these technologies had been increasing due to:
  - Ongoing challenge of timely access to health care (e.g. aging populations and a global shortage of health care professionals)
  - Patient demand



# Virtual Care and the COVID-19 Pandemic

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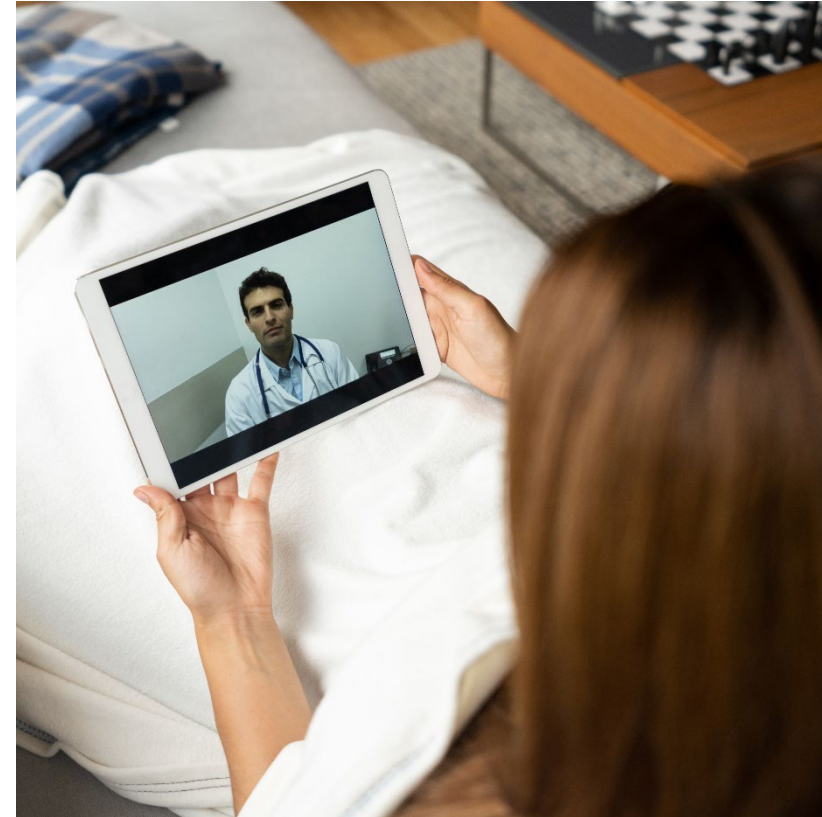
## Why is it important:

- Virtual care has allowed health care providers to continue to assess and manage their patients with ongoing medical care while maintaining social distancing

## How can you participate in virtual care:

### Real time appointments:

- Telephone
- Video conferencing



# Virtual Care

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## Prior to your appointment:

- Understand that this method of communication is not secure in the same way as a private appointment in an exam room.
- Ensure that you are prepared to engage in your virtual appointment in an appropriate setting (quiet, private area).
- For video conferencing, be sure to use a private computer/device (i.e., not an employer's or third party's computer/device) and a secure internet connection.
- Test video conferencing software and network connection.
- Ensure that your health care provider has updated contact information (including preferred telephone number).
- Have a back-up plan with your health care provider in the event of a technical failure for a video conference occurs (such as a preferred telephone contact number)
- Ensure that you have access to the details of your medical history and an updated list of medications with you for your appointment
- Ensure that you have contact information for your pharmacy and LifeLabs location (including telephone and fax numbers)

# Virtual Care

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## During your appointment:

- Ensure that you have a list of questions to discuss with your health care provider
- Where feasible and safe, discuss how you can collaborate with your health care provider in the direct involvement of your medical care (e.g. diuretic self-adjustment)
- Make sure that you schedule any future follow-up, where needed, and discuss this with your health care provider.





# Virtual Care

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## How LifeLabs can help:

- Save My Spot!™ - online check-in service to better serve you
- MyVisit™ - Offering our services right at your home (MyVisit™)
- My Results online secure service that allows you to access many of your LifeLabs test results

LifeLabs has temporarily adjusted the hours of operations at some locations. Visit [locations.lifelabs.com](https://locations.lifelabs.com) for the latest information on locations in your area.