

TELEMEDICINE VISIT CHECKLIST

Telehealth has been brought into sharper focus by the COVID-19 pandemic. Use these simple pearls to make your telemedicine appointments a success.

PROFESSIONAL SETTING

- Video background should be clean and uncluttered and reflect your status as a physician - you are building the cultural space for a medical encounter.
 - *Note: Digital backgrounds do not reassure the patient that you are working in a private setting.*
- Maintain privacy.
 - *Windows and glass office walls are a privacy concern; do not conduct a visit in a location where someone could see your screen.*
- Conduct the visit in a quiet location.
- Mute your phone (or explain clearly if you must take a work call).
- Avoid distractions in the background, especially moving objects such as a ceiling fan.
- Remember your setting imparts non-verbal communication - use it to enhance your credibility, not detract (for example, don't display a bowl of candy if you are counseling on diabetes).

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- Dress like a doctor.
- Make sure your ID badge is visible to the patient.
- Make sure your face is well-lit and clearly visible.
 - *If your eyes can be easily seen you have it about right.*

LEGAL CONCERNS

- Clearly introduce yourself, including your credentials and employer.
- Ask the patient to state their name, date of birth, and specific current geographic location.
 - *As a general rule, you must be licensed to practice medicine in the state where the patient is located during the appointment.*
- Ask if there is anyone else in the room with the patient; if you don't ask you won't know.
 - *If the patient is not alone, make sure they are comfortable discussing private health information in front of the person present with them.*
 - *Tell them to let you know if the situation changes by anyone else entering the room.*

TELEMEDICINE DISCHARGE

- Ask the patient to summarize their understanding of your instructions.
- Reiterate key points and clarify as needed.
- Ask the patient to end the visit to ensure you don't cut them off.
- Know how you will escalate care if medically necessary, including how you will call 911
 - *Pro tip: You need to know where the patient is!*



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