

How to Prepare for a Remote Appointment

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly increased the use of telemedicine. For a lot of people with type 1 diabetes, regular “in-person” follow-up appointments with their healthcare team have switched to remote appointments since March 2020. Although remote consultations don’t provide the same human contact as traditional ones, this new alternative has become frequent and is likely here to stay.

By eliminating the need to travel, telemedicine can be a more convenient and cheaper—yet just as effective—way for patients and doctors to meet. But for an effective appointment, it is crucial for healthcare professionals and patients alike to be well prepared beforehand.

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for your next remote appointment with your diabetes healthcare team.

The patient’s responsibilities

Three to six weeks before

- Schedule an appointment for your blood test.
Depending on where you live, there can be a two- to four-week wait time. You also need to allow for a few days for your healthcare team to get access to your results.

A few days before

If you use a continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) system and/or an insulin pump:

- Download your CGM, pump and/or glucometer data, and share them with your healthcare team, either online by linking your account or by email. If you need help to download your data, contact your sales rep, your pharmacist or the device’s support team.
- Go over your CGM, pump or glucometer data, and try to identify any trends you could discuss with your healthcare team.

If you DON’T use a CGM or insulin pump:

- Get your blood sugar results ready in a shareable format (logbook or Word document); don’t hesitate to ask your healthcare team for a template if needed.

In any case:

- Make a list of key points you wish to discuss:
 - Questions/concerns
 - Any health-related events/changes since your last appointment
 - Prescription renewals
- Write down or keep in mind your insulin/diabetes medication doses and schedule.
- Weigh yourself and write down your weight, if possible.
- Take your blood pressure and write it down, if possible.

During the appointment

- Find a quiet spot with no distractions.
- Have on hand:
 - A pen and paper to write down any important information
 - Your list of key points
 - Your blood sugar data or capillary blood sugar results
 - Your weight and blood pressure information

The healthcare professional's responsibilities

Healthcare professionals also have some responsibilities to fulfill.

Before

- Review the patient's file.
- Retrieve the last blood test results.
- Analyze the blood sugar data sent by the patient at least one day before the appointment.
- Get any prescriptions ready.

During

- Availability, listening, openness, etc.
- Punctuality (if possible).
Remote appointments, just as in-person consultations, can be delayed or postponed. In the former case, try and plan some task or activity that can easily be interrupted when you receive the call. In the latter case, **if you're unavailable at that time, the healthcare team will call you back at the scheduled time.**

To learn more about how to get ready for a remote appointment, please refer to the following guide: [Type 1 diabetes in the age of COVID-19: How to prepare for a remote appointment?](#)