

VIDEO CONSULTATION INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

What is a video consultation?

A consultation conducted by video conference between you and your specialist at a distant location.

What are the advantages of video consultations?

Every patient's situation is different but in general the benefits of this service are:

- better access to specialist care
- reduced waiting time to see your specialist
- reduced travel time and costs
- reduced absence from work.

How can I have a video consultation with my specialist?

To have a video consultation with your specialist, you must be referred by your GP and the doctors must consider it safe and suitable for you. Not all specialists offer video consultations – your GP will discuss options with you.

Do I have to participate in a video consultation?

No. You are able to attend a face-to-face consultation with your specialist if you prefer. A video consultation will only happen if your doctors consider it safe and suitable and you are happy to have a video consultation.

Where are the video consultations provided?

You can participate in a video consultation from our practice.

Who will arrange the video consultation?

We have a video consultation coordinator who arranges video consultations with specialists.

What if I need to cancel my appointment?

Video consultations require a lot of coordination at our end and at the specialist's end so please try to keep your video consultation appointment. If you need to cancel, please let us know immediately, because rescheduling video consultations is more complicated than rescheduling a face-to-face appointment.

How should I prepare for a video consultation appointment?

You can help get the best from a video consultation by following these simple steps:

- arrive at least 15 minutes early to allow for preparation time
- avoid wearing brightly patterned or reflective clothing as this may not show up well on camera
- switch your mobile off or to silent mode
- speak clearly so your voice can be picked up by the microphone
- look at the camera so you can achieve good eye contact with the specialist
- if you have a question or need help during the video consultation, just ask.

What happens at the video consultation appointment?

You (and if necessary a support clinician from our practice) and the distant specialist will be on a TV/video or computer screen at each end of the video consultation.

At the start of the consultation everyone will introduce themselves and the reason for the consultation will be explained. You will be asked some identifying questions such as your name, address, and date of birth to make sure the right patient, right doctors and right health records are present. The specialist will speak with you and ask you questions in the same way as they would at a face-to-face consultation.

Who will be present?

Apart from you, your GP (or another support clinician from our team) and the specialist, nobody else can be present unless you agree to this in advance. It is your choice whether you agree to have other parties present.

As with a face-to-face appointment, your spouse, partner, family or friend may accompany you if you wish.

What if I want to have a private discussion with my specialist?

You may ask your GP (or another support clinician from our team) to step out of the video consultation at any time if you wish to have a private discussion with the specialist and they will do so provided they think your safety is not at risk.

How private is the video consultation?

The same privacy and confidentiality requirements that apply to face-to-face consultations apply to video consultations.

What if I need to be examined?

The specialist may ask your GP or support clinician to examine you on their behalf. This may or may not be on camera. We will respect your privacy and a private area or gown will be provided if you need to remove clothing for an examination.

What if I have special needs?

If you have special needs such as an interpreter or a wheelchair, please let our video consultation coordinator know and they will make a note of these when your consultation with the specialist is confirmed.

Will the video consultation be recorded?

No. Our practice does not record video consultations and we do not give patients permission to make their own recordings of a video consultation. If your specialist or your GP thinks it would be helpful for your treatment to record particular images during your video consultation, they would first seek your written permission to do so and they would ask you to repeat your consent on camera.

What if I feel I can't continue?

Most patients feel a little nervous at the beginning of their first video consultation because it's a new way of seeing a doctor. However, most patients soon feel very comfortable with this kind of consultation. It's very unlikely you'll feel unable to continue with a video consultation but if this does happen you can leave although your consultation fees may still apply.

How much will it cost?

Generally you will receive two bills for the video consultation – one from your GP (or another member of our clinical team) and one for the distant specialist. Our normal billing process will apply.

If there are likely to be any other fees associated with the video consultation we will let you know in advance.

Am I eligible for a Medicare rebate?

Medicare rebates for video consultations are available to patients from remote, regional, and outer metropolitan areas as well as patients of residential aged care facilities or Aboriginal medical services anywhere in Australia. If you fall into one of these patient categories and are privately billed, you will be eligible for a Medicare rebate.

How can I provide feedback on my video consultation?

We are keen to get your feedback so we can continue to improve our video consultation services. Our reception staff will be able to provide you with a patient feedback form, the contents of which you permit us to share with other health professionals, but only after being de-identified in order to preserve your privacy.

What if I have questions?

If you have any medical questions about whether a video consultation may be suitable for you, please talk to your GP.

If you have any general questions about how video consultations work, please talk to our video consultation coordinator - Louise Smith

Where can I get more general information about video consultations?***For more information about patient eligibility and payments***

Contact [Medicare Australia](#)

Phone: 1800 222 032

Email: telehealth@medicareaustralia.gov.au

MBS online – Connecting Health Services With the Future: Overview for Patients

www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients

MBS online – Connecting Health Services With the Future: Questions and Answers for Patients

www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients-QA