



Prairie Faith Parish Nurse Ministry News—July 2020

Body

Mind

Spirit

There has recently been an increase in the use of **telemedicine visits**, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other terms you may hear might be **telehealth**, **telephone visits**, or **virtual appointments**. The primary purpose at this time is to help decrease the spread of COVID-19, but this technology has actually been in use for several years, especially for patients who live in rural or isolated areas and need the services of a specialist in a distant location. Each hospital or clinic may use slightly different technology, and your clinic will explain how to access their system for the visit. Many insurance companies including Medicare have expanded their coverage of this type of visit recently.



What patients should use telemedicine appointments?

- Patients that would like to go ahead with their office visit but want to avoid coming in person.
- Chronically ill patients that physicians would prefer not expose to potential illness.
- Patients who have had a positive screening for COVID-19.

Examples of visits that can be seen via telemedicine, in addition to routine follow up appointments:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Allergies | • Counseling/therapy | • Sinusitis |
| • Arthritic pain | • Diarrhea/Vomiting | • Sore Throats |
| • Asthma/Bronchitis | • Rashes | • Sports Injuries |
| • Some cardiac issues | • Respiratory infections | • Urinary Tract Infections |

Getting Ready:

- ✓ Choose a private and quiet area in your home.
- ✓ Try to limit the distractions in the room.
- ✓ If you have young children in the home, try to set them up with an engaging activity before the appointment.
- ✓ If connecting by video, check your internet connection, power cords and start up your device (i.e. tablet, phone or computer) 15 minutes prior to the visit.

Do:

- ✓ Join the call on time.
- ✓ Be fully present - save household chores and other tasks for later.
- ✓ Limit eating during visit.
- ✓ Place your tablet/phone/computer on a stable surface.
- ✓ Keep your camera on the entire time.
- ✓ Make sure that anyone attending with you can be seen on camera, unless otherwise instructed.
- ✓ Have a phone available in the event of a videoconferencing difficulty so your provider can call you.

Don't:

- ✓ Do not join while driving.
- ✓ Do not join in a public area or while outside if possible.
- ✓ Do not have children or pets in the room if possible.
- ✓ Do not work on household chores during the visit.
- ✓ Do not have TV or loud music in the same room.
- ✓ Do not walk around from room to room while in the visit.

If you don't have internet at home or access to a smartphone, you may be able to have your visit by telephone (voice only), or coordinate with the parish nurse for computer and internet access.

Emergencies such as symptoms of a stroke or heart attack, broken bones, bleeding, difficulty breathing, etc. still need to go to the nearest emergency department.

(Sources of information include www.haysmed.com)

Feel free to call or email me to: schedule a confidential appointment to discuss your health/wellness questions, schedule transportation to a medical/dental/counseling appointment if you need a ride, request a prayer shawl for someone in the community going through a difficult time, locate community health resources, request other parish nurse work, or discuss your ideas for the health ministry! 😊

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Managing Stress and Anxiety During Difficult Times

For many, stress levels are high as a result of the pandemic and other current events in the news. In addition, life events such as the death of a friend or family member, financial difficulties, family problems, or illness still occur. Anxiety and fear trigger a fight-or-flight response that motivates us to act to protect ourselves, which can be a positive reaction in a dangerous situation. However, chronic stress can cause insomnia, headaches, stomach aches, high blood pressure, and other physical symptoms, as well as feelings of anxiety, depression, irritability, isolation, loss of sense of control, etc.

Try these ideas to maintain physical, emotional and spiritual health:

- ♥ **Gather accurate, factual information** from trusted sources to better understand the situation, and help with problem-solving and a greater sense of control. Avoid sensationalized, dramatic information; limit the time you spend on social media or listening to the news.
- ♥ **Establishing a routine and structure** can be helpful and calming. Create a daily and weekly flow of events. Start your morning with a relaxing cup of **tea or coffee**, make a **list of projects** that you have wanted to accomplish, read **inspirational writings** and **journal** to record your thoughts, hopes, emotions and concerns.
- ♥ **Stay connected** to friends, family and neighbors through phone calls, texting, emailing and video calls if you are not able to visit in person. Human connection can lower stress and anxiety levels and lessen the feeling of isolation.
- ♥ **Take a few moments to care for yourself each day**, such as **soaking in a long soothing bath**, listening to **calming or upbeat music**, getting plenty of **sleep**, and eating **healthy food**. Be sure to **spend time outdoors**; connecting with **nature** improves mood and reduces cortisol levels (your body's main stress hormone). **Avoid using tobacco, alcohol and drugs** to cope with stress.
- ♥ **Look for the good**. Acknowledge and accept that both good and bad are often beside each other in the same moment in life. **Intentionally look for those good things, and nurture those thoughts**, amid the difficulties in life.
- ♥ **Regular exercise and movement** help release built-up fight-or-flight energy so you feel calmer. Exercise releases endorphins, which are feel-good chemicals in the brain. **Stretching and yoga** also are helpful in reducing stress.
- ♥ **Prayer, meditation, mindfulness, and breathing exercises** are good ways to release stress. Now is a good time to learn these approaches and incorporate them into daily habits as a preventative tactic.
- ♥ **Reach out**. Everyone is in this together, and that is a comfort. **You are not alone**. If you feel alone, don't be silent. Instead, reach out to a friend or health care professional. Many people are feeling the same way. If you communicate your hopes and fears, and listen to others, it divides the burden and decreases the sense of isolation and anxiety.

(Sources of information include Mayo Clinic, Healthline, Anxiety and Depression Association of America)



Lord, you know better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will someday be old. Keep me from getting talkative and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Keep my mind from the recital of endless details—give me wings to come to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains—they are increasing and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. Help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

Make me thoughtful—but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Amen.

(Attributed to a Mother Superior (Seventeenth Century)

From "For All the Saints: A Prayer Book for and by the Church")

