

A message from Dr Loo regarding virtual care

COVID-19 is placing stress on Canada's public health system. Our clinic is starting to offer virtual care to make sure that we can continue to care for our patients safely and effectively. This means that we will be using video and audio technologies for some patient visits rather than asking all patients to come into our office. Some of these technologies are provided by the Province. Others have been provided by vendors like Google, or Apple to help make discussions with you as easy as possible during these difficult times.

We do our best to make sure that any information you give to us during virtual care visits is private and secure, but no video or audio tools are ever completely secure. There is an increased security risk that your health information may be intercepted or disclosed to third parties when using video or audio communications tools. To help us keep your information safe and secure, you can:

- *Understand that emails, calls, or texts you receive are not secure in the same way as a private appointment in an exam room.*
- *Use a private computer/device (i.e., not an employer's or third party's computer/device), secure accounts, and a secure internet connection. For example, using a personal and encrypted email account is more secure than an unencrypted email account, and your access to the Internet on your home network will generally be more secure than an open guest Wi-Fi connection.*

You should also understand that electronic communication is not a substitute for in-person communication or clinical examinations, where appropriate, or for attending the Emergency Department when needed (including for any urgent care that may be required).

If you are concerned about using video or audio tools for virtual care, you can ask our office to arrange for you to reschedule your appointment or be seen in person. However, please note that visiting a health care provider in person comes with a higher risk of coming into contact with COVID-19 and the possibility of spreading the virus.

By providing your information, you agree to let us collect, use, or disclose your personal health information through video or audio communications (while following applicable privacy laws) in order to provide you with care. In particular, the following means of electronic communication may be used : email, videoconferencing (including Skype, Facetime, WhatsApp etc.), text messaging (including instant messaging) and website/portal.

COVID-19 is shifting how care is provided nationwide and physicians across all specialties are adapting practice patterns to maintain care while protecting the health of patients and staff. Thank you for your patience, cooperation and understanding.