



Patient Information and Consent for Receiving Physiotherapy through Virtual Care / Telerehabilitation

Patient Information

Telerehabilitation (also called Virtual Care, or Telehealth) is the use of information or communication technologies to allow you and your physiotherapist to connect via video (or other remote monitoring technology) to receive physiotherapy services at a distance, when an in-person visit is not possible. Here are a few frequently asked questions about telerehabilitation in physiotherapy.

When might telerehabilitation be appropriate?

Telerehabilitation may be appropriate if you cannot easily attend an in-person visit because there is a shortage of appropriate physiotherapy care available in the region where you live or because you have transportation or mobility problems.

Telerehabilitation may be used to augment your ongoing treatment by enabling your treating physiotherapist or other health care provider to consult with a physiotherapist who has a skill set uniquely suited to your individual needs.

Telerehabilitation may offer a way for you to receive follow-up care by your original treating physiotherapist if you are no longer in the location where the initial treatment was provided.

When would telerehabilitation not be appropriate?

Telerehabilitation has limitations compared to an in-person encounter such as the inability to perform hands-on examination, assessment and treatment. For this reason, in many circumstances, if suitable in-person care is available it will be preferable.

It is up to you and the physiotherapist to determine what is best for you, based on your particular condition and preference, available technology, and other risks and benefits.

Will I get good quality care?

Expect to receive the same safe, quality care that you would get during an in-person visit. The College expects physiotherapists to meet the same standards of practice regardless of how the services are delivered.

What are the risks of receiving care via telerehabilitation?

The risks of receiving physiotherapy care specific to telerehabilitation relate mostly to concerns about the privacy of your personal health information, and your personal safety. The physiotherapist is required to ensure that the location where you receive care is safe, and that procedures are in place to ensure the availability of help in the event of an emergency. The physiotherapist may recommend that the visit proceed in the presence of another person to enhance the safety and value of the visit.

Do I have to pay for telerehabilitation physiotherapy services?

It depends. Some physiotherapy services may be covered by government funding, for example if you are having a follow up visit after discharge from hospital. If the service is not publicly funded, you would need to pay in the same way as you would if you were attending an in-person visit. In some cases, extended benefit carriers, ICBC, and WorkSafeBC will cover your virtual care session.

If my physiotherapist isn't in the room, who will help me and what types of care can be provided?

Depending on the setting and the circumstances, physiotherapists providing consultation or treatment via telerehabilitation may have assistance from other physiotherapists (for example, where a physiotherapist with a specific clinical expertise is being consulted), from physiotherapy support workers, from other health care providers, or from your family members or friends. The physiotherapist is required to ensure that an appropriate level of support and assistance is available to address your needs and ensure your safety, and that you agree to the involvement of this assistance.

Examples of services that can be provided by telerehabilitation include, but are not limited to, consultation with local physiotherapists, education and instruction, monitoring your progress with a treatment program, and supervised exercise or meetings with your health care team.

What if I have a concern about the care?

If your physiotherapist is located in another province, they are required to be licensed in their home province or territory as well as the province or territory in which you receive the care. You may choose to raise your concerns with the regulator in either province or territory.

Consent:

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided on telerehabilitation and that I agree to receive my physiotherapy through telerehabilitation. I also understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time.

Patient Name: _____

Patient Signature: _____

Date: _____