



MEDICAL CONSUMERISM DURING A PANDEMIC



It can be hard to know how and when to access medical care during a pandemic. There can be a lot of rapidly evolving information. There can also be a lot of misinformation.

Medical consumerism is the practice of choosing your medical care wisely. Just like you are a consumer of food or clothing, you are also a consumer of your medical care. To make smart choices consider the following:

1. If you think you might have COVID-19 follow these [recommendations made by the CDC](#).
2. If you are sick for other reasons and aren't sure if you should see your doctor, you can always call and talk it through with your primary care physician. Many doctors are using telehealth right now. Telehealth is a virtual visit. If you have never done something like this and it feels overwhelming, that's okay. Your doctor will walk you through it. The most important step is to reach out to your primary care doctor and get their recommendation on next steps.
3. Avoid emergency rooms unless absolutely necessary. If you aren't sure if you need emergency care and choose to go, be aware that many hospitals are assessing people at the door to determine if it's the right place for you to receive care. This is to keep everyone safe. There is no need to be exposed to other illness if it's not absolutely necessary.
4. Pharmacies are staying open and, like hospitals, they may meet you at your car rather than have you come into the store. Many pharmacies also have drive-through areas that would be better to limit exposure.
5. If you have a chronic condition like diabetes, high cholesterol, or blood pressure, reach out to your insurance company. They may have special nurses (often referred to as case managers) who can help you manage your health to keep you out of doctors' offices and hospitals. These programs have been around for a long time, and now is a great time to take advantage of them.

Remember to make good decisions with your doctor. Be sure to get information from accurate and trusted sources like the Center for Disease Control, Mayo Clinic, or professionals through your health insurance company.