

6 Ways to Use Your Online Health Information Now

You may not be able to see or talk to your doctor that often, but you can take control of your health information by accessing your patient portal.



Key Takeaways

- *Most basic information about our health is digital and is stored in online patient portals.*
- *Getting control of your health information can help you or your loved ones.*

For access to your doctor's patient portal, you will need to set up an account. The service is free. A password is used so that all of your information is private and secure.

1. Patient portals have information about you from your previous visits.

Use those numbers – like weight or blood sugar levels – as a starting point so you can track changes or trends in your health.

2. Patient portals have doctor's notes from previous visits.

Use this information to prepare for follow-up visits.

3. Patient portals have lists of your medication and dosages.

Use this to know what medications and how much to take, and even request refills.

4. Patient portals can be accessed from computers or smartphones.

You can tap into your health info anywhere, anytime. It's great if you're out of town.

5. Most patient portals have personalized calendars.

Use the calendar to confirm, schedule, or reschedule visits – for you or a loved one.

6. Most patient portals allow you to send messages directly to care teams.

If there is a change in your health, you can inform your care team.

Healthcare systems are putting significant effort and resources into tools such as patient portals to help you become more engaged in your care and ultimately experience better health outcomes.

Additional Information:

- [Patient Portals: Express Lane on the Health Information Highway](https://www.ahima.org/patient-portal-express-lane) (AHIMA.org)
- [How to Use a Patient Portal](https://www.healthit.gov/patient-portal) (HealthIT.gov)

- [Making Patient Portals Patient-Friendly](#) (*ACP Internist*)
- [Four Strategies for Effectively Using Your Patient Portal](#) (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
- [Improving the Patient Experience through Patient Portals: Insights from Experienced Portal Users](#) (*Patient Experience Journal*)
- [How Does a Patient Portal Benefit My Child?](#) (ParentingSpecialNeeds.org)
- [Logging in: Using Patient Portals to Access Health Information](#) (National Poll on Healthy Aging)

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