

Telemedicine FAQs

Contributed by
Wednesday, 25 February 2009
Last Updated Saturday, 18 April 2009

Telemedicine FAQ for Nursing Home Care

What is telemedicine? (see our presentation)

Telemedicine is a way to provide basic medical care for common problems by using two-way,

high definition video conferencing equipment. This technology allows a patient and a remotely located physician to interact "face-to-face."

Telemedicine is not meant to replace your primary care physician. It is used in situations where your own

doctor is not onsite to see you, and a telephone call may not be sufficient. In these situations, telemedicine

may prevent you from making a needless trip to the emergency room or prevent a delay in getting the right treatment in a timely manner.

What will happen at a telemedicine visit?

Telemedicine will be used in situations where it is determined that you need an urgent medical evaluation by a physician, but your own physician is not available onsite.

In these situations, your nurse will bring a telemedicine cart to your room. In some situations, you may be brought to the telemedicine cart. You will then be able to see and speak to the doctor on the telemedicine screen.

The doctor will ask you questions about your medical problem. Your nurse may listen to your heart with a stethoscope. Because this stethoscope is connected to the telemedicine equipment, the doctor will also be able to hear your heart.

What types of problems can be treated?

Examples of illnesses that may be treated include coughs, colds, shortness of breath, ear aches, skin problems and depression. Certain chronic conditions can be monitored such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Telemedicine can also be a resource for health information and education.

Is the information shared with anyone?

Information from all visits will be kept strictly confidential under HIPAA guidelines. All information however will be communicated to your own physician in order to maintain proper continuity of care.
