FAQs about Secure Electronic Messaging

# What is secure electronic messaging?

Secure messaging is a way to communicate with your health care providers using the Internet. It’s like email but has extra security to protect your health information.

# How do I get started?

Ask your health care providers or clinic staff if secure messaging is available and how to sign up. It may be available through a patient portal, a secure online website that gives you access to your health information.

# What are the benefits to me?

* **Relationship with your health care providers** –Regular communication can improve your relationship with your health care providers and help them get to know you better.
* **Convenience** – You can send messages at your convenience from your home, office, or anywhere you have Internet access.
* **Not rushed** – You can take your time to think about what you want to say.
* **Feel more comfortable discussing sensitive topics** – You may feel more comfortable discussing sensitive health issues using messaging rather than in person.
* **No phone messages or “telephone tag”** –You won’t have to wait on hold or leave phone messages. And you will never miss a response because of “telephone tag.”
* **Messages are saved** – Messages become part of your medical record. You can go back to messages later to recall important information.

# Can I communicate about family

# members too?

You may be able to use secure messaging to stay in touch with health care providers who are caring for your family members, such as an older parent or relative.

# Who will read my messages?

Only your health care team, such as your health care providers and specific clinic staff, can read your messages.



**You can use secure messaging to:**

* Ask questions you may have forgotten during your visit or that come up between visits
* Let your health care team know how you’re doing or about any changes in your health.
* Get help for minor health concerns that may not need an office visit
* Request medication refills and referrals to specialists
* Get help with billing and insurance issues

***Remember!  
Secure messaging is not  
for urgent care issues!***