



Telehealth How-To's and FAQ's

At Integrative Psychology, PC, we have been proponents and practitioners of telehealth for years and have seen first-hand the benefits it can provide. In times of uncertainty, where the need for flexibility in accessing behavioral healthcare is paramount, we are honored to be able to continue to provide support for you in this format. Here is a quick-start guide to get your sessions going.

Before the Session Starts

- Make sure you have a private space to be in where you won't be disturbed or heard. This may be in a bedroom, home office, or even, if needed, in a large closet, basement, or in your car in your driveway (please do NOT worry about clutter or messy surroundings as we will only be focusing on you and your emotional needs).
- If you live with others you will need to make sure family members don't disturb you (though if young kids are at home we can brainstorm options), and you might consider putting a white noise machine or a small window fan on outside the door of the room you are in to mask the sound so you won't be heard outside the door.
- In most cases you will need a laptop or desktop computer with a video camera and microphone (these are built in to most modern laptops). We may be able to use telehealth with a smartphone instead if needed.
- Using earphones/buds plugged into the computer helps maintain privacy and improves sound.
- Make sure all unnecessary web-browsers are closed and that no one else in your home is using the wifi for streaming (or at all, if possible)
- Be comfortable! Find a comfortable position, perhaps with pillows or a throw blanket, a cup of tea or essential oils, so you can create a healing, soothing environment for yourself in this time to care for yourself.

Beginning a Session

- Technology has made it easy to access telehealth, and we have multiple options. Our primary platform is a HIPPA-secure website called Doxy.me (<https://doxy.me/patients>) that we've been using for years. To begin a session you simply cut and paste (or type) this into your internet browser on your computer at our scheduled appointment time: <https://doxy.me/drgray>. This will take you to my virtual waiting room and you will just relax and wait until I join the session, much like an in-person session.
- Here are some tips from Doxy.me for a good quality connection: <https://help.doxy.me/en/articles/95861-5-tips-for-a-great-experience>.
- Using Chrome or Firefox as your browser can sometimes be better than Safari or Explorer.
- Using earphones/buds plugged into the computer helps maintain privacy and improves sound

Troubleshooting

- Make sure your volume is up and that your video and microphone and video camera are on (usually this happens automatically).
- There is a chat function on the bottom left of the screen so we can type a message to each other if we can't hear each other-If the signal is bad, simply restart your computer and copy and paste <https://doxy.me/drgray> back into your browser and wait for me to join again.
- If more than two minutes have gone by and you haven't been able to re-connect with me on doxy.me feel free to call or text me using our SpruceHealth app, or I will do the same.
- We do have other HIPPA-secure backup platform options if doxy.me is not working which include SpruceHealth via the smartphone app, Zoom, and Google Meet, and I can share more information on these if needed.

Will insurance cover telehealth?

For most people, yes! Many insurers were already covering telehealth, but as of 3/15/20, Governor Baker, recognizing the vital need and value of telehealth in the midst of the National and State emergencies, announced that all Massachusetts insurers, including GIC, must cover telehealth and at the same rates as they would in-person visits (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/march-15-2020-telehealth-order/download>). As always, do feel free to call your insurance to check (though this is a very new development that they might not have heard about yet), and ask me if you have any questions, especially related to OON coverage. If you happen to have an out-of-State plan, please know that more States are enacting similar orders, or already have, but you may want to call your plan to double check on coverage.

What are the pros and cons to using telehealth?

Although research has shown that for many mental health treatments, telehealth produces similar or identical outcomes as in-person treatments, the research is still being gathered, and there are some differences to be aware of. Since telehealth generally only shows faces rather than full body, some nuances of communication via body language can be missed. Likewise, if there is a poor video or sound connection, communication can be difficult or less clear. Much like with texting conversations, it's important to check in and make sure what you are communicating and what you are hearing is accurate and understood as intended. Overall, though, for people who are at least somewhat familiar with using computers or smartphones, telehealth is overall thought to be safe, effective, convenient, and an important tool in maintaining continuity of care.

Are there risks to using telehealth?

Please see our consent form. Risks are minimal and similar to beginning therapy, though we will need to identify appropriate emergency plans and contacts if they were to be needed. In some cases I may deem that telehealth is not appropriate or safe to use and we will discuss alternatives if this is the case.

Aside from talk therapy, what other kinds of behavioral health treatments can be offered via telehealth?

So many!!! As a long-time 'digital mental health' provider and proponent I am happy to share that telehealth can be used for a range helpful treatments including CBT, mindfulness-based approaches, EMDR (in some cases), relaxation and stress management (including hypnosis and guided imagery), virtual reality for mental health, and even biofeedback and neurofeedback! If you are interested in any of these options, and/or if you also already have any of your own equipment such as a MUSE neurofeedback band, EmWave from Heartmath, temp sensor, or VR device (such as an Oculus Go), please let me know!

Anything else I need to know?

You will be asked to complete a telehealth consent form before we begin our first session (via your Simple Practice client portal). You will also be asked to confirm your location at the start of each session and attest that others are not present and that the session is not being recorded (unless previously agreed to). I'll be happy to address any other questions or concerns you might have, and am looking forward to being able to continue to support you in this way and help you navigate these unprecedented events with resilience and meaning.