

Virtual Oncology: A Guide for Cancer Patients

Virtual Oncology is a service available to residents living outside Sydney or Halifax. Virtual Oncology connects you and your local nurse or doctor with your cancer doctor in Sydney or Halifax by using a secure video camera, microphone and monitor. Just like a regular clinic visit, you will be able to see and talk with your cancer doctor. Telehealth allows you to have your cancer care closer to home.

When booking your appointment, if you or your healthcare team believes telehealth is not right for you, an in-person visit will be booked.

What do I need to bring?

- Your health card.
- A list of your medications (prescription and over the counter drugs, vitamins and supplements).
- A list of your allergies.
- If you have private health insurance, bring that card too.

You may find it helpful to have a family member or friend come with you. They can take notes or just listen. They can help you remember things or may hear something you may have missed.

What will happen at my Virtual Oncology appointment?

First, a local nurse or doctor will ask you questions and may examine you. Then, you will connect with the cancer doctor in Sydney or Halifax using Virtual Oncology. Your cancer doctor will ask you and the local nurse or doctor questions, talk with you about your cancer and answer your questions. They may ask the local nurse or doctor to examine you again. They may also order more tests for you.

After your visit with the cancer doctor is over, your local nurse or doctor will tell you what will happen next and answer any questions you have.

During or after your appointment, if you or your healthcare team believes Virtual Oncology is not right for you, an in-person visit will be booked.

Is my Virtual Oncology appointment private?

Yes, just like a regular clinic visit, your privacy is protected by hospital policy:

- Your information is confidential.
- The Virtual Oncology communication lines are private and secure.
- Recordings and photos will not be taken without your consent. You can refuse or withdraw consent at anytime and it will not affect your care.

What if there are problems with the equipment?

Sometimes equipment problems affect Virtual Oncology appointments. Your local nurse will discuss other options available to you. These may include:

- Having the appointment by phone.
- Rescheduling your telehealth appointment.
- Booking an in-person appointment.

Patient and family feedback is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to education.cancercare@nshealth.ca or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only.

It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.