

# Preparing for Your Telephone Visit

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Clinic, Burnaby Hospital



Telephone visits from your doctor or nurse have likely become part of your routine care. You will still need to have in-person visits so we can check how your disease is progressing. Telephone visits help us to keep track of your health and look after your health concerns between in-person visits.

If you think it would be helpful, family or care partners are welcome to listen in on the call.

## Ways to make the most out of the visit

- Schedule 20 to 40 minutes away from distractions and interruptions so you can focus all of your attention on the call.
- Check your email for any forms we might send. Complete and return them before the visit.
- Prepare yourself for the call (see “5 ways to prepare for your telephone visit” on page 2).
- Be ready to answer the phone.
- Ask others in your household to leave the line free.
- Check that your phone is charged, has good reception, and is not on “silent”.
- Have patience when there is a delay in the call coming in.
- Make sure the people you want to join the call are available.

## What to expect from a telephone visit

Your doctor or nurse might ask about any of these topics.

### • Your general health

*Example:* Do you have any new health issues since your last visit?

### • Relapses

*Example:* Have you had any relapses since your last visit? Try to include as much detail as possible, such as when they happened, how long they lasted, what symptoms you had, any other things going on at the same time.

### • MS symptoms

*Example:* Do you have any new, changed, or unusual symptoms since your last visit? Try to give as much detail as possible.

### • Everyday function

*Example:* Have you noticed any changes in your ability to walk, or do everyday activities? Is anything getting harder to do?

### • MS medicines

*Example:* Have you been taking your medicines as instructed? Have you had any problems taking your medicines? Have you had any unwanted side effects from a medicine?

### • Other medical care

*Example:* What other medical specialists are you seeing, such as a pain doctor, skin doctor, psychiatrist, pregnancy doctor (obstetrician), sexual and reproductive health doctor (gynecologist)?

## **5 ways to prepare for your telephone visit**

1. Clearly communicate.
  - Speak clearly and normally.
  - Since we can't see you, please be as clear and as detailed as possible when you describe your symptoms or any problem you are having.
2. Take time before the call to write down the details about any symptoms you have been having.
3. Write down any questions you have or key issues you would like us to answer or explain.
4. Keep a list by the phone of the medicines you are taking and your pharmacy's address and phone number.
5. Have your eyeglasses by the phone in case you need them.