

# TCH Genetics Clinic

## Telemedicine Appointments



**Texas Children's  
Hospital®**

- What is telemedicine?
  - A way to receive medical care without meeting with a doctor in-person.
  - Appointments are by video or telephone call.
- Why is the genetics clinic using telemedicine?
  - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is safer to meet this way when possible.
  - Telemedicine appointments are a safe way for us to make genetic testing recommendations and start the insurance approval process.
- How are telemedicine appointments similar or different from regular in-person appointments in genetics clinic?
  - Telemedicine appointments are very similar to in-person appointments. The table below shows different parts of a typical genetics clinic evaluation and how they are completed in these two situations.

Part of a genetics visit	Telemedicine	In-person
Medical and family history questions	This will be collected during the appointment, or someone from the clinic might call you before the appointment to collect this information.	Information collected during the clinic appointment.
Physical exam	The physical exam will be completed using video and/or photos sent in by the patient's family. This is more limited than an in-person visit, but it can often give enough information to make testing recommendations for most patients.	Completed by looking at the patient, touching the patient (getting reflexes, feeling the abdomen, etc.), and listening to the patient (listening to the heart, lungs, etc.).
Insurance pre-authorization for genetic testing (if recommended at the end of the visit)	This process will be started after the appointment, and it typically takes at least two months. Someone from the clinic will call you with instructions if testing is approved.	This process will be started after the appointment, and it typically takes at least two months. Someone from the clinic will call you with instructions if testing is approved.

### Tips to make the most of your telemedicine appointment:

- If your appointment is by video, practice opening the links beforehand to make sure the sound and video works correctly.
- Make sure you are by your telephone or logged into the video chat room a few minutes before your scheduled appointment time.
- Make sure your location has bright lighting so the doctor can see everyone well.
- Send photos of the patient via MyChart before or after the appointment to help with the physical examination.
- Call the genetics clinic main line at 832-822-4280 if you have any questions.