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# Telehealth in the Management of Parkinson's Disease:

*Strategies to communicate with your doctor during the Coronavirus Pandemic*



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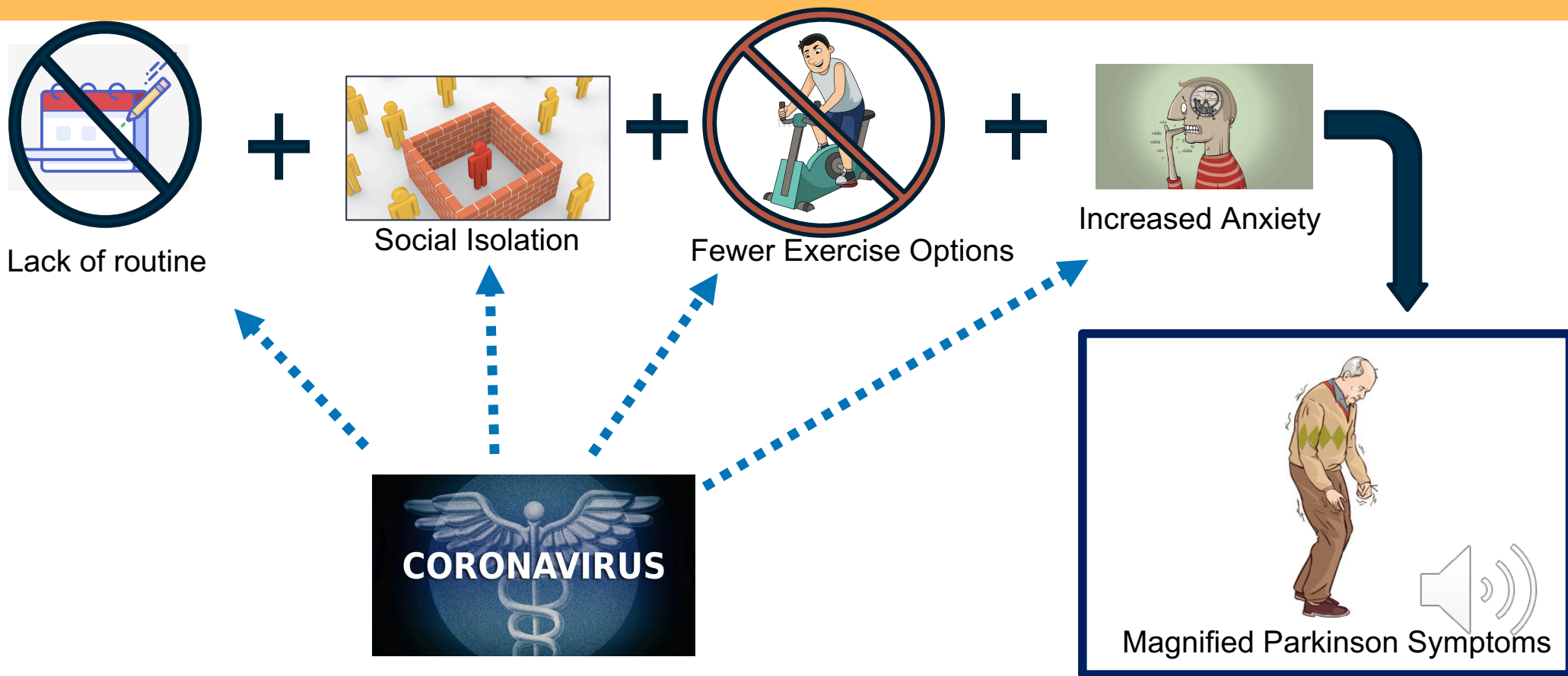
# Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to

1. List 3 ways to communicate with your doctor during the pandemic
2. Describe 3 ways to prepare for a telemedicine (videoconference) visit



# Parkinson's disease during a pandemic



# Certainties in a time of uncertainty...

Your doctors and medical team will not abandon you!



<https://intouchhealth.com/5-things-you-never-knew-about-telehealth/>



# Telehealth: What is it?

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) defines “telehealth as the use of electronic information and telecommunication technologies to promote and support long-distance clinical healthcare...”



[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

# New regulations to improve physician accessibility



New legislation has allowed HHS to relax telemedicine rules

1. Patients can now receive care where they are (in their home, nursing home, etc).
2. CMS will now pay for 80 services given via telehealth.
3. Those patients who prefer it can use audiophones
4. New AND established patients can use telemedicine
5. These options are not just limited to physicians – your PT/OT/ST , psychologist or clinical SW can also communicate with you in this way.



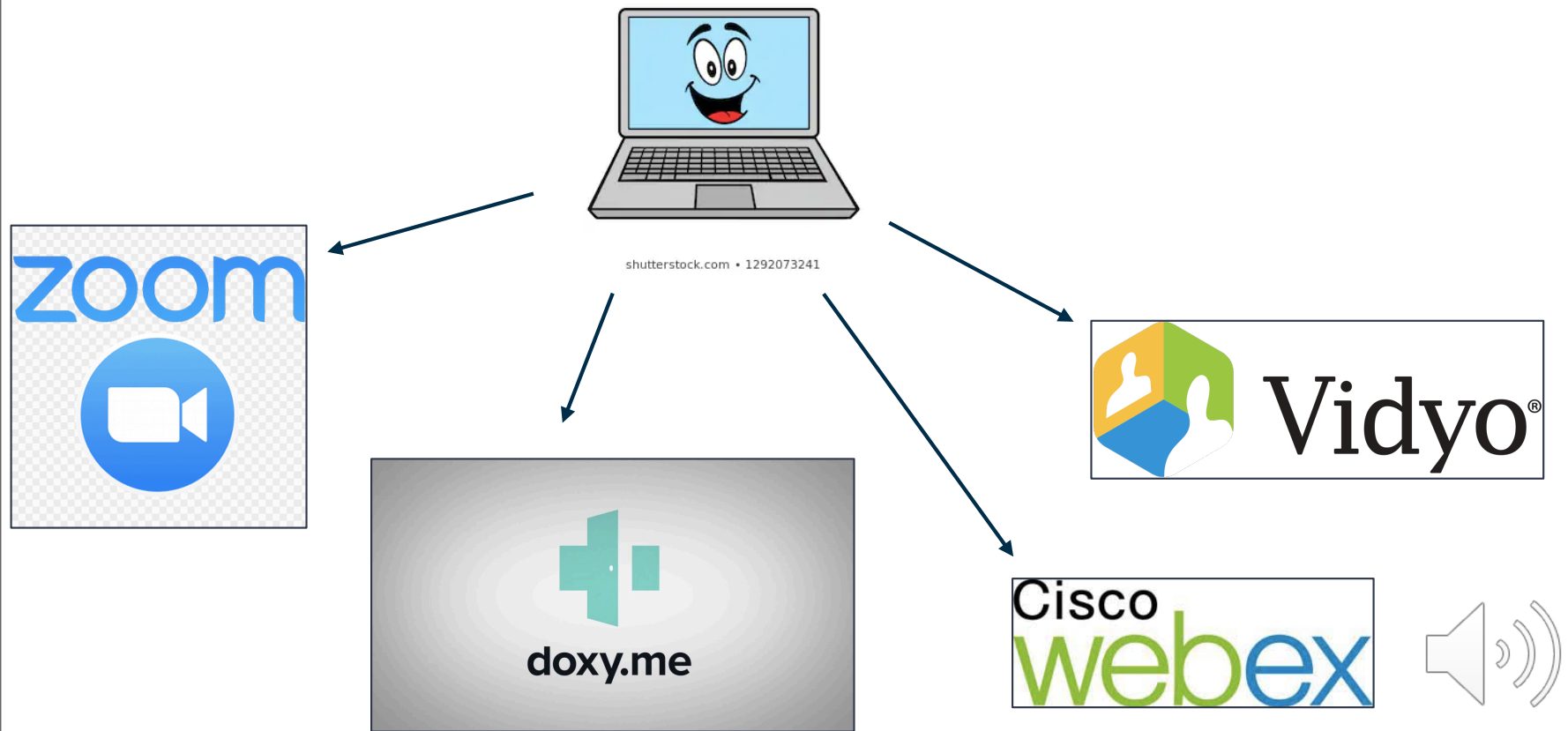
# What about cost?

TYPE OF SERVICE	WHAT IS THE SERVICE?
<b>MEDICARE TELEHEALTH VISITS</b> (Videoconference)	A visit with a provider that uses telecommunication systems between a provider and a patient.
<b>VIRTUAL CHECK-IN</b> (Phone)	A brief (5-10 minutes) check in with your practitioner via telephone or other telecommunications device to decide whether an office visit or other service is needed. A remote evaluation of recorded video and/or images submitted by an established patient.
<b>E-VISITS</b> (Email or Portal)	A communication between a patient and their provider through an online patient portal.



[www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov)

# Videoconference Calls: Many options



# Preparing for your telemedicine visit...

1. Find a private, quiet place (turn off TV)
2. Charge your computer or device in advance. Make sure you have an internet connection.
3. Close shades to prevent backlighting and sit facing a light rather than sitting in front of one
4. Have a second person available for assistance with the video
5. Set up a seat 2-3 feet from the webcam
6. Set up a second seat 8-10 feet from the webcam for a full body exam
7. If possible, have a hallway accessible with the camera at one end to facilitate a gait exam.
8. Have your regular phone handy, in case of technical issues
9. If you have a blood pressure cuff, scale and/or thermometer keep it handy



# Preparing for your telemedicine visit if you have DBS

10. Have your patient programmer ready to check your battery status and settings



# Preparing for any doctor's visit...

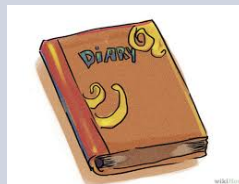
**1. Write down and prioritize your symptoms and questions**



**2. Have your medications handy (as a list or the pill bottles)**



**3. Have your symptom diary (if you are having fluctuations)**



**4. Have records of relevant lab work, prior meds tried, imaging or contact info for other doctors**



# At your visit...

- In some centers, you may get a phone call first to make sure you have the technology set up, ask you to get your medications, check blood pressure etc.
- Your physician will identify him/herself and then verify your identity (name, date of birth)
- You will be asked to give consent to proceed with the telemedicine visit



# The Pros and Cons of Videoconference visits

## Pros

- Convenient
- Safer during the pandemic
- Effective/efficient
- Allows you to avoid traffic!

## Cons

- Technical challenges
- Requires additional equipment (computers, phones)
- Some limitations of the physical exam
- Reduced emotional satisfaction?



Additional tips:

For non-urgent issues like medication refills

*...Please request the refill 10 days before you run out!*



## Other tips:

Sign up for your physician's portal so that you can communicate through electronically!

- Good way to clarify instructions
- Good way to ask brief questions, request refills or reach out to your doctor without long wait times on phone



# We have strategies to stay connected! (with proper social distancing)



Phone



Email or Portal



Videoconference visits

We are in this together!



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