

# Telehealth for Individuals with Communication Disabilities

Telehealth is an option to help you access health care services, including if you have a communication disability such as difficulty hearing, seeing, or speaking.



## What are communication disabilities?

Problems with hearing, vision, or speech are examples of communication disabilities.



Deafness and hard of hearing are common hearing impairments. [Fifty-five](#) percent of people aged 75 and over have substantial hearing loss.



Poor sight and blindness are examples of vision impairments. Many people have problems with their sight, including [93 million](#) American adults at high risk for serious vision loss.



Aphasia is an example of a language impairment. About [2 million](#) people in the United States have aphasia.

## What accommodations are available to me to use telehealth?

Let your provider know if you need auxiliary aids and services to help you communicate during your telehealth appointment. Examples include:



Asking for more time. This could include additional time logging in and getting ready for the appointment. You could also ask for more time during your telehealth visit if needed.



Requesting real-time captioning. This allows you to read what your health care provider is saying.



Using a qualified sign language interpreter to participate in your appointment. The interpreter should be able to join your appointment from another location.



Using Telecommunications Relay Services. This can help you communicate by phone.



Using a screen reader with the telehealth platform. This is helpful if your provider is sending you messages or videos.



Using a headset or sound strengthening device. This can help to ensure you hear your provider during the appointment.



Having a caregiver or family member join a telehealth visit to support you.

### Tip

These aids and services should be provided free of charge and in a timely manner. If a provider denies your preferred method of accommodation, they must still provide an alternative aid or service that is equally effective to the maximum extent possible.