

# 5 Must Ask Questions Before Trying Telemedicine

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*Published March 23, 2020*

*"The greatest story of all time... is your comeback story" ~ Dr. Lin*

Pain doesn't stop because you aren't doing anything about it. We have the ability to control it while even being at home.

With the current circumstance and uncertainty, I have come to realize that one thing you CAN do is deal with the nagging pain you may have put off or have been reluctant to take on. It's a great time to start your body's recovery. There is no need for fancy manual techniques, which is largely for what Rehab and Revive has been known. But really, our success has always been due to the amazing PLAN we create for each and every one of our patients. A solid plan of care coupled, of course, with its solid execution, is the first and foremost most crucial part of the healing process.

At this moment, apps and platforms like Zoom and other video and at home mediums are being explored. Already the market is being flooded with these types of at-home self-care programs. So how should you choose to spend your time, money, and trust?

Below is a quick guide to finding the right telemedicine place for you, whether it is for Physical Therapy, Self-Healing, medical support, and even fitness.

## What's Telemedicine?

Let's start with what Telemedicine actually is. These kinds of online platforms were created originally to be convenient for on-the-go and busy people or to reach out to anyone around the world. That way, specialized doctors would be able to "treat" people even if they weren't necessarily in the same zip code.

Driving 30 minutes and waiting for 45 minutes to only be seen by a doctor very quickly, and then driving back wastes so much of your precious time.

Telemedicine was also for those who had contracted the flu or other mild illnesses to prevent uncomfortably sitting in a waiting room at urgent care for who knows how long. There's nothing worse than waiting and feeling uncomfortable! Another benefit is that you can be socially responsible and avoid spreading illness to other bystanders. Doctors can now diagnose the patients safely in their homes.

There's something unique about getting the right medication, or testing/assessment without going into a clinic. In my world of Physical Therapy, it's about getting the right prescription of therapeutic exercises, self-intervention, and education to a broader audience.

With COVID-19, aka the coronavirus, health privacy restrictions are being lifted to allow for more remote access. Why is this important? Well, personal information can be easily hacked from apps and programs that are not designed to hold such sensitive information. There's a reason these restrictions existed in the first place.

Hackers right now are on the prowl and ready to find any means to access personal information and possibly use it against you.

So how do you navigate the world of Telemedicine, and what questions should you be asking your prospective choices? Below are the FIVE most important questions you should ask yourself when choosing a telemedicine program for you or a loved one!

## **Question #1**

### **Is the platform HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliant?**

If the telemedicine platform you are considering is not, I would stay away because any of your personal information should be taken seriously. If people are using SKYPE, ZOOM, FACETIME, GOOGLE CHAT, FACEBOOK, it isn't HIPAA compliant. Although the laws are lessening at this current moment, that means these providers didn't give it a thorough thought to protect you and do their due diligence.

#### Who Do You Trust?

You should look at anyone in their respective industries known to get results. Check Yelp reviews, check google reviews, rate my doc forums.

## **Question #2**

### **How many years of practice does the doctor/therapist/clinician have?**

Do you want someone young or someone with experience or a specialization in your particular concern or issue?

For physical therapists, the most important is the PT, DPT, or MSPT designation, which means they are licensed in their state.

In my profession, we have lots of groups with their own acronyms. My belief is you can check on their biographies and see what they are and if they seem like a lifelong learner in your interview with them.

For instance, I have learned and been certified in areas of strength and conditioning and a few specialized manual therapy programs post-doctorate.

Having additional certifications and distinctions shows that your prospective clinician is a master in their field and continues to learn new techniques and treatment styles.

### What To Look For?

CONSISTENCY - Make sure you are getting the same clinician for every appointment. Get out of the "getting to know you" phase with your doctor and start healing ASAP. You want to be able to build trust and rapport so that you aren't starting from square one every time you have an appointment.

### **Question #3**

**Do they have an ONLINE presence with Instagram/Youtube/Facebook that you can reference?**

This is important because someone with the technology, equipment, and know-how is likely to be prepared to take their practice to an online platform. Also, checking out their online presence is always a good way to check their reputation. Are there a lot of negative comments on their videos or social media? Do they seem to be living up to the precedent that their advertising claims?

### What Can Be Done In A Therapy Session ONLINE?

If you're looking for a physical therapist, in general, this is what most can provide with Telemedicine.

#### 1. We Still Can Treat With Our Eyes And Knowledge

Just by looking at how you are moving and what you tell your therapist, we are often able to pinpoint with good enough accuracy what is ailing you. This is why it's so important to choose a good therapist. A less experienced therapist may not have honed the craft of observing biomechanics.

#### 2. Self-Mobilizing Manual Care

Many self-help techniques are available that your PT might be able to teach you. At R+, we make tons of self-help videos that you can use for symptom management and strengthening. Just check out [youtube.com/rehabrevive](https://www.youtube.com/rehabrevive) for a reference.

#### 3. Thorough, Planned Out Self-help Methods/Exercises

A road map and a destination are essential to your success. Goals and expectations should be clearly defined and set by not only your therapist but you too! After all, it's your healing, and you should have a say in what goals you would like to achieve.

Are you a busy body that barely has time to catch a breath? Or are you retired and have some extra time to kill to do exercises? A generic recommendation to do an exercise 3 times per day for 30 repetitions doesn't cut it. Good physical therapists will consider your everyday life when creating an exercise regimen for you. And a great Telemedicine program will remind you when it is time for your exercises and hold you accountable. No more writing it in a calendar or setting yourself a Google reminder.

Last, your exercises should be well taught and easy to understand. As mentioned earlier, we make step by step exercise videos for our patients and the general public. We think it is essential for each person to be able to revisit each exercise to ensure they are doing it accurately and efficiently.

#### 4. Home Office And Ergonomic Setup Advice

Especially with the times, we are spending more and more time at a computer. Add a shelter in place, and we find ourselves in all sorts of wonky positions trying to get work done on our living room couch. You may have an ergonomic workstation in the office, but your physical therapist should be able to give you at home quick tips on how to make the best out of telecommuting.

#### 5. Habit Training

How you cook, how you sit, how you stand, how you walk, how you pick up your kid's toys-this: all can be reviewed now without us physically being there. And these activities can play a huge part in your recovery.

#### 6. Education: Learning About Pain and How It Behaves

Pain science is advancing so quickly in our field, so you want someone who understands the latest research and information on pain. Has anyone taken Explain Pain by Butler and Moseley or a similar course in their continuing education?

### Question #4

**What can you DO to help me? And listen to see if they have a plan thought out.**

#### How Effective Is Online Compared To In-person Manual Therapy Sessions?

With a solid plan, most pains and ache intensity are minimized by at least 50%, and functional outcomes can improve significantly within a 6-8 week time frame. I believe with manual therapy, close to 80% of people improve in their functional outcomes and pain levels.

This being said, the PLAN is only as good as one's ability to follow through with it. As therapists, we call this patient compliance. Patients are responsible for doing the exercises they have been prescribed and for changing habits, trying new strategies, etc. All of which are key to recovery and should be taken into consideration when you think about gains or setbacks in your healing process.

## Question #5

### **What's your method of billing? How much does this cost me out of pocket?**

In-network clinics have insurance billers in house. They accept your insurance, you pay your copay, and they bill your insurance company for the remaining amount of your appointment fees.

My practice, Rehab and Revive Physical Therapy, is an out-of-network clinic. This means we don't have a relationship or contract with any insurance company. Every visit is paid for out of pocket by our patients. That being said, any patient can send in their superbill to their insurance carrier to seek reimbursement.

\*NOTE: Insurance companies are now reimbursing for Telehealth physical therapy sessions at the same rate as in-office sessions due to COVID-19 shelter in place orders. This is an excellent opportunity to try out Telemedicine and potentially get a higher rate of reimbursement!

### Is the Billing In a Safe Way That Is Protecting You As a Patient?

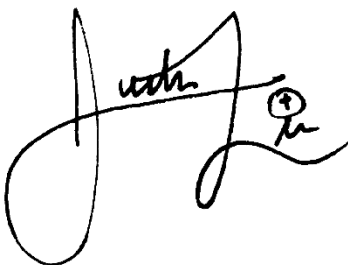
VENMO, Facebook payments, ZELLE, Wechat Pay is NOT an acceptable method of payment. Programs that accept these forms of payment are not being run by LEGIT businesses, nor are they HIPAA compliant. Make sure you find a provider that securely takes payment.

Paypal Business, Square Up, or Intuit programs are secure sites meant to protect payment information.

**I hope this information helps you navigate this wild west of Telemedicine right now. In the end, you want to give your time and money to a LEGIT business operation that has thoroughly planned out and tested their telemedicine platform. It never hurts to ASK the right questions when vetting your online provider!**

Always relay to your provider any comments and feedback during your care. Listen to your body and really tap in; there is no one who is a better healer than you. This is the time to dive deep and unlock your body's healing mind and spirit.

*Remember, We Will Get Better, Together!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin C. Lin". The signature is stylized with a large loop at the beginning and a small circle at the end.



**Rehab and Revive  
Physical Therapy**

*Rehab and Revive Physical Therapy, the leaders in chronic pain and nerve pain, are proud to introduce a commitment to your health with a HIPAA compliant app called [Physiapp](#). It has encrypted video, audio, and messages for the user and therapist.*

*Rehab and Revive has been on Youtube providing self-help tools for nearly a decade. And have been working over the past few years to provide an online database of private proprietary exercises not released to the public as we use on Youtube.*

*Dr. Lin has been the #1 rated Physical Therapist in California for nine years running on [Yelp.com](#). He has been in practice for nearly 15 years. His innovative prescription plans are the true essence of unlocking your own body's potential to heal. Give our care specialists a call at 714-900-3880 or email us at [Hello@RehabandRevive.com](mailto:Hello@RehabandRevive.com).*

