

## Remote patient monitoring: 6 Essential Questions to Ask Your Doctor



By: Laura Bublitz, BS RN-BC, CMSN, CCHP, CMCN, LNC Sp.

March 2025

As you get to your doctor's office for a 6-month blood pressure check, you hear coughing and sneezing. Guess what? You forgot your mask.

Fear of getting the flu or COVID rises along with your blood pressure.

“Why do I need to be here for a blood pressure check?”

“How many days will I be out of work this time if I get sick?”

This is a common scenario in our healthcare system. Well people having to go for follow-up in the clinic risk exposure to air-borne pathogens.

What can be done?

Thankfully, technology has improved. Providers can receive electronic data directly into medical record vs. patients needing to be seen in clinic. These devices can make you more in control of your health, lower your healthcare costs, improve your health, provide easier communication with your provider, and you may even be able to avoid ER visits.

Remote patient monitoring systems provide this ability. They are increasing as standard of care to improve patient health status, empower patients, and decrease healthcare costs.

## **1. What is Remote Patient Monitoring?**

Remote patient monitoring (RPM) utilizes digital technology to collect patient health data outside of a clinical setting. Data is electronically transmitted to healthcare providers directly into patient medical record for review and management of medical conditions between in-person visits.

No need for exposure to the sick patients that do need a clinic visit. No traffic or parking issues either.

## **2. What Medical conditions are appropriate for Remote Monitoring?**

About thirty million Americans are using remote monitoring to manage their medical conditions.

Chronic disease patients have the highest potential to decrease cost and improve outcomes. RPM is best suited for high-cost chronic diseases such as:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Asthma

CDC reported in 2024 that 129 million Americans had a chronic disease. The United States has an annual healthcare expenditure of 4.5 trillion dollars, and 90% of it is spent on people with chronic diseases.

RPM has devices to collect necessary data for the clinician. Depending on your diagnosis, more than one type of monitoring device may be recommended.

Providers support remote patient monitoring, as it decreases ER visits and hospital admissions, which patients and insurance companies love. Another benefit is the improved patient-provider communication, which has a positive impact on patient engagement and health status.

### 3. How does it work?

Your provider will discuss which device(s) would provide the best information to manage your care.

Common devices are:

- Blood pressure cuff
- Thermometer
- Pulse oximeter
- ECG
- Glucometer
- Peak Flow meter
- Scale
- Wearable-Smart/fitness tracker



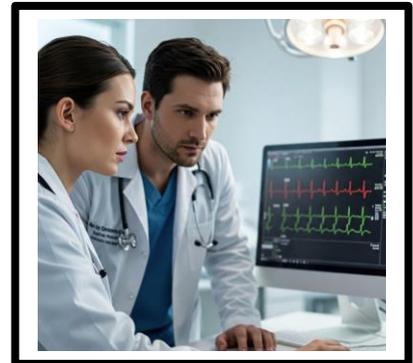
Data is collected through these devices via Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or phone connection and transferred to your Electronic Health Record. The provider reviews data to determine if an intervention is needed or if medication dosages need adjustment.

Some clinics have remote monitoring technicians 24/7 to watch for any abnormal reports. They notify the provider to determine course of action.

## 4. What are the benefits?

8 benefits have been identified by RPM companies:

- Early detection
- Cost effective
- Improved patient health status
- Enhanced patient engagement
- Enhanced clinical decision making
- Decreased community exposure
- Improved patient satisfaction
- Improved provider workflow



The ability to analyze data in real-time makes an enormous impact on patient outcomes. Being able to immediately intervene to avert an ER visit or possible permanent disability more than proves this monitoring system's worth.

Patients become more involved in their medical care by adjusting lifestyle choices. Self-care and the ability to make decisions with your trusted provider are essential in a successful treatment plan and long-term benefits.

Decreasing community exposure to pathogens is another benefit of the RMP. Whenever you are in a waiting room, urgent care, or even the lab, someone is often coughing and sharing their germs. You don't want to be the one spreading the germs either. Patients with chronic conditions can be more susceptible to exposure. Their symptoms are more severe than the average person and increase the risk of hospitalization.

Devices are easy to use, and patients like learning more about their condition and how it relates to the data. A survey conducted by the University of Pittsburgh reported 90% patient satisfaction with RPM.

Improved provider workflow decreases clinic visits, allowing more patients to be seen. The impact of increased communication between providers and patients with RPM improves their overall health status. The University of

Pittsburgh study also showed that hospital readmissions were down by 76% when remote monitoring was part of their discharge plan.

## **5. So, how much do I have to pay for this?**

Due to significant cost savings in patient care from fewer clinic and urgent care visits, this system has been highly supported by insurance. Medicare will usually cover 80% after your deductible is met. Contact your insurance provider to determine coverage.

There may be opportunities to use your own Smartwatch or fitness tracker.

Dealing with personal data in the digital world can be concerning. Ask how your data is going to be secured from the device company and from the medical provider. Use strong passwords on all applications with sensitive data. Ensure you have a HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) agreement with the provider and the device company to protect your medical information.

Make sure you understand and are comfortable with the data security process. Ask questions, if they are unable to answer them, see if you can follow up with your provider after you do some device and platform research.

## **6. What if it stops working?**

The clinic or the company providing the device will teach you how to use the device. Your provider will explain what data is being collected and if it is continuous or intermittently transferred. Discuss what action you should take if it stops working.

Devices can malfunction if used incorrectly or poorly maintained. Make sure you have and read the user manual. Discuss care and any questions with the company providing the device.

Laura Bublitz, RN  
[laura@bublitzrn.com](mailto:laura@bublitzrn.com)

Keep 24/7 information and contact information readily available for medical or equipment questions.

If you are using your own Smartwatch or fitness tracker, follow manual instructions, or call their support services.



## Improved Health: Bring it On

The goal of using these devices is to improve your health. They are easy to use and do not cause a lot of interference in your activities. More complex monitoring may be more restrictive, but your clinician or device supplier will help with the initiation and be there to support you for any issues.

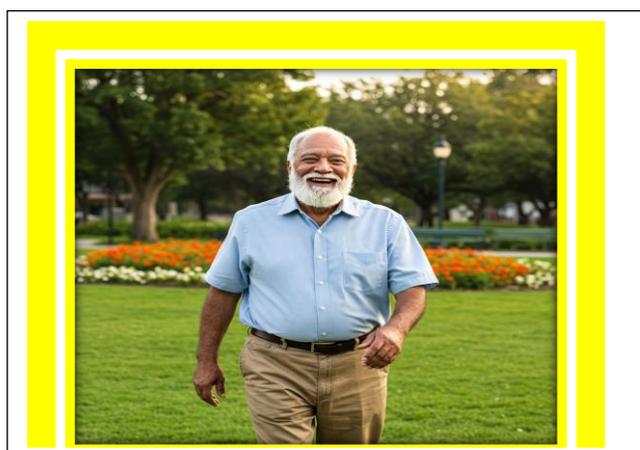
No more unnecessary clinical visits. The RPM gives you the ability to closely collaborate with your provider on treatment options. Resources are available to enhance your ability to manage your own medical condition.

Seems like a pretty good deal. No one wants to go to the ER in the middle of the night for guidance your doctor can provide over the phone. Decreasing costs and empowering patients in decision making is what it is all about.

## Case Study:

This is Fred, who is 70 years young. For years, his diabetes and hypertension were poorly controlled.

After his last hospitalization for high blood sugar and hypertension, his doctor suggested remote patient monitoring to try to stabilize his numbers.



Laura Bublitz, RN  
[laura@bublitzrn.com](mailto:laura@bublitzrn.com)

Fred, being from an older generation, did not fancy the idea of being “watched.” With the help of his grand-daughter Sophia, he agreed to “give it a go.”

Continuous glucose monitoring and daily blood pressure checks were ordered, with data transferred to his doctor. He was frustrated at first, didn’t want all the “fuss.”

After a few days, he became more interested in the data and followed his blood sugar trends. By the end of the week, he had learned how RPM could improve his health.

During his 6-month follow-up, which was from home, his doctor noted that he had no ER visits. Fred reported feeling better and exercising with Sophia. He had some questions for his doctor about medications and how to further improve his numbers.

Success!

Fred was engaged and wanted to take more control of his medical conditions.

Fred’s new motto became: “If I can do this, anyone can.”

## **Conclusion**

Subscribe to Fred’s new motto. Learning how to manage your health is empowering. Health providers will always support questions and discuss options for medical care. Before your next medical visit, write down questions and goals for your doctor. You will be amazed at how many resources your provider will share. Building connections and improving communication is the roadmap to better health.

**Free e-book**

**How to ensure patient understanding of  
benefits of using remote monitoring systems**

**GET YOUR FREE  
E-BOOK  
HERE!!**

Laura Bublitz, RN  
[laura@bublitzrn.com](mailto:laura@bublitzrn.com)