



OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. ROMAN, PHD

Helping you solve life's challenges

Welcome to Telehealth! We are pleased to provide this new service and opportunity.

Telehealth is an exciting development that merges traditional health care services, including psychotherapy, with modern technology. While many see this as a new development, it has actually been around for many years. Telehealth began in 1948 when x-ray images were transmitted 24 miles away to another location for the first time. In 1959, doctors at the University of Nebraska first used two-way TV images to communicate between sites interactively.

Of course, technology has come a long way since those early days.

This document is intended to answer all your questions. If we miss something, please ask your telehealth therapist, or contact our office. You can do so by phone at (210) 342-1906, e-mail at office@drmichaelroman.com, or even by instant message through our client portal. We begin with the essentials, followed by a short FAQ section.

The following information has been modified from information provided by SimplePractice. SimplePractice provides our platform for scheduling, billing, practice management, and telehealth. Much of the information contained in this document has been supplied by, or at least recommended, by their experts.

What equipment do I need?

To participate in Telehealth appointments from your home, you will need a reliable, high-speed internet connection with a bandwidth of at least 10 mbps and any one of the following devices:

- Desktop computer
 - with webcam, speakers, 2.5 GHz processor, & 4 GB of RAM
- Laptop computer
 - with built-in webcam & speakers, 2.5 GHz processor, & 4 GB of RAM
- Tablet
- Smartphone
 - With *at least* iOS 10 or Android 6.0

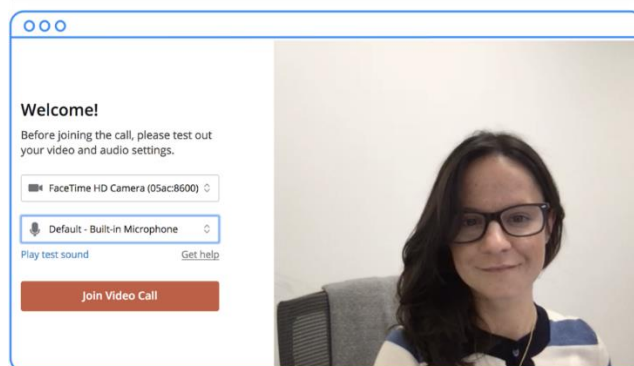
(Note: To use a smartphone or tablet, you must first download **Telehealth by SimplePractice** from the app store.)

How to join on a desktop or laptop computer

If you plan to use a desktop or laptop, there is nothing to download prior to your appointment. Here are the steps to join:

1. Approximately 10 minutes before your appointment, you should receive a reminder.

- **Note:** If you have already consented to receiving text and/or email reminders, you will continue to receive them for Telehealth appointments as well. For new patients, make sure you have provided your email and or mobile phone number so that we can enable email or text reminders.
2. Click the unique link embedded in the reminder. (**Note:** You may have to copy and paste the link into your web browser.) Your video call screen will now open in a new tab.
 3. If your therapist has already joined the call, you will see their face on the screen. If they have not, you will see yourself. See example below.



4. You will also see the Welcome prompt. Click **Play test sound** to test your camera and microphone settings.
5. When you are ready, click **Join Video Call**. This will take you straight into the session.

How to join on a smartphone

If you plan to use a mobile device, here are the steps to join:

1. Download **Telehealth by SimplePractice** (for [iOS](#) or [Android](#)) in the app store. Approximately 10 minutes before your appointment, you should receive an email appointment reminder.
2. Open the reminder on your mobile device and click the unique link. This will open the **Telehealth by SimplePractice** app.
3. If your therapist has already joined the call, you will see their face on the screen. If they have not, you will see yourself.
4. When you are ready, click **Join Video Call**. This will take you straight into the video call.

Note: There may be a slight delay for your telehealth therapist to join the appointment if they are finishing with a previous appointment. Please be patient. They will join momentarily.

Tips for success

- We recommend joining the video appointment a few minutes early to test your settings.
 - If you can connect to the Internet, but are having trouble joining the video, you can use our recommended [Pre-call Tool](#) (click to go to the link).
 - Remember, to use a smartphone to join a video chat, you must first download the **Telehealth by SimplePractice** app available in the app store for [iOS](#) or [Android](#).
 - If you need to cancel or have questions about the appointment, please contact the office or your therapist. Please remember that late cancellations charges may apply, as presented in our office Practice Policies.
 - During normal business hours, contact the office at (210) 342-1906 if you did not get the link so we can send it to you via email or secure messaging. If there is no answer, or if you are calling outside normal business hours (Mon – Fri 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM), call your therapist directly at the number they have given you. For Dr. Amodei, please contact her at 210-381-9377. For the quickest response, **please call**, do not e-mail or instant message the office.
 - Locate the volume control on your device. You may need to adjust the volume or mute/unmute your speakers.
-

What can I do to do improve the quality of the connection?

If you live in an area with slow internet, this can really affect the speed of your connection. Here are some basic steps that can improve the overall quality:

- **Use wired Ethernet instead of Wi-Fi whenever possible.** Wi-Fi will work, but you may experience a lag and interference, which can make your video and audio choppy. Wired internet will give you a much smoother, more consistent experience. If you experience a lag or interference while using Wi-Fi, we recommend moving closer to your router.
- **Test your internet connection speed.** To test the speed of your internet connection, click this link: <https://www.speedtest.net>. If it is under 10mbps and you're using Wi-Fi, switch to a wired internet connection if you have one or try restarting your router.
- **Close other programs.** If you have several programs running in the background, closing them will almost certainly improve the quality. Also, make sure you're not downloading any large files while connected to your session.

If you are unable to connect, please contact your telehealth therapist or the office as soon as possible to see if I can help you with troubleshooting.

How should I prepare my space for a Telehealth appointment?

- Identify a suitable room that is quiet, private, and free of distractions.

- To keep background noise to a minimum, make sure to close any doors, shut windows, turn off the television, and keep loud pets in another room if possible.
 - Just like with a regular office visit, arrange to keep children in a different room, or with another caregiver.
 - Consider hanging a “Do Not Disturb” sign on the door to avoid interruptions.
 - If someone else is nearby enough to overhear the conversation, please let your therapist know this at the start of every call.
 - Position the camera on your device so the therapist can clearly see your face during the session. Note that on mobile devices, the picture-in-picture you see of yourself is narrower and cuts off the top of the image slightly compared to image your therapist will see.
 - Restart your computer every day (or at least every few days) for it to run as efficiently as possible.
 - Close any unnecessary programs and applications (e.g., email, word processing, etc.) and any open windows in your web browser.
-

What happens if I lose connectivity or still experience poor video or audio quality?

- If you are unable to connect, please contact your therapist or the office as soon as possible for help with troubleshooting.
- If you and the therapist have problems with connectivity that takes more than 10 minutes to resolve, the therapist will end the session and will call you by phone or message you through the secure messaging function of the Simple Practice portal to reschedule or make alternative arrangements to finish the call.
- Billing codes allow us to bill for a session that lasts at least 16 minutes. If a session is terminated early due to problems with the connection, you and your insurance company will be billed for the time the session lasted. Note that this may not change your copay.

What happens if I am late in joining the session or do not cancel a scheduled session within 24 hours?

- The therapist will keep the link available for 20 minutes but reserves the right to disconnect from the call after 20 minutes. You will be billed a no-show charge as agreed to in our Practice Policies document which you signed as part of your initial paperwork.
-

FAQs

What is Telehealth?

Telehealth allows us to meet through audio and video over the internet.

Why should I try Telehealth?

We are very excited about this new option because it means no travel time, and you won't have to take time off work or other priorities. Plus, it's 100% HIPAA compliant and secure.

How much will it cost?

Your cost for a video appointment will vary depending on the coverage you have with your insurance provider. Most insurances charge a copayment just like traditional appointments, and it most likely will be the same amount. We can determine your exact coverage and what your copay will be before we schedule an appointment. We ask that all copayments be made online. Our front office staff can walk you through the process if you have any questions. Our standard billing charges apply to each session unless other arrangements have been made in advance with your therapist.

What should I do if I didn't get the reminder with the link?

Contact the office at (210) 342-1906 (or if you are seeing Dr. Amodei please contact her at 210-381-9377) if you did not get the link so we can send it to you via email or secure messaging. For the quickest response, please call, do not e-mail or instant message the office.

Is Telehealth private?

Just like a face-to-face appointment, your Telehealth visit will be private and confidential. Keep in mind that we don't control things on your end of the visit. We encourage you to carefully consider what you need to do on your end to keep the visit private.

Will the appointments be recorded?

None of our appointments will ever be recorded or stored.