

# Use and Experiences with Patient Portals Among Older Adults



May/June 2023

[www.healthyagingpoll.org](http://www.healthyagingpoll.org)



**Q1. A patient portal is a personal, password-protected connection to a health care practice for exchanging information through a computer, phone, or tablet.**

**Do you have a patient portal?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

**Q2. How many patient portals (separate logins for different providers or hospitals) do you have?**

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3 or more
4. Not sure

**Q3. The patient portal I use most often is for connecting with my...**

1. regular health care provider
2. specialist
3. hospital
4. not sure

*For the remaining questions, please answer about the patient portal you use most often.*

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**If Q1 = 1**

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**Q4. When did you last use your patient portal?**

1. Within the past month
2. 1–6 months ago
3. 7–12 months ago
4. 1–3 years ago
5. More than 3 years ago
6. Have never used it



If Q4 = 1, 2, 3, or 4

**Q5. How does using a patient portal compare to using the phone for doing the following:**

	Portal is better	Phone is better	Portal and phone are about the same	I have not done this
a. Scheduling an appointment				
b. Getting test results				
c. Asking a question				
d. Updating your contact or insurance information				
e. Reporting symptoms or information about your health (e.g., blood pressure, glucose values, etc.)				

If Q4 = 1, 2, 3, or 4

**Q6. How does using a patient portal compare to using the phone to request the following:**

	Portal is better	Phone is better	Portal and phone are about the same	NA / have not requested this
a. Referrals to other providers				
b. Prescription refills				
c. Medical records be sent to another provider				
d. Authorization for others to see your health information				



If Q4 = 1, 2, 3, or 4

**Q7. How confident are you about the following related to using your patient portal?**

	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not confident	NA
a. Logging in and navigating the portal				
b. Getting a timely response from a health care provider if you need one				
c. Understanding the information in my portal				
d. Knowing how to contact my health care provider				
e. Knowing my information in the portal is secure				

If Q1 = 2 or Q4 = 5 or 6

**Q8. If you were to use a patient portal account, how confident would you be about the following?**

	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not confident	NA
a. Logging in and navigating the portal				
b. Getting a timely response from a health care provider if you need one				
c. Understanding the information in my portal				
d. Knowing my information in the portal is secure				

If Q1 = 1

**Q9. Who, if anyone, have you authorized to have access to your patient portal?**

Select all that apply.

1. My spouse/partner
2. My adult child
3. Other family member
4. Caregiver or helper
5. Friend
6. No one else

If Q9 = 6

**Q10. Why have you not authorized anyone else to see information on your patient portal?**

Select all that apply.

1. Do not need help using my portal
2. Prefer to keep my health information private
3. Did not know this was possible
4. Do not know how to do this
5. I don't use a patient portal
6. Other



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**If Q1 = 2 or Q4 = 4 or 5**

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**Q11. What are the reasons you do not have/have not recently used your patient portal?**

**Select all that apply.**

1. No need/do not want it
2. Not comfortable with technology/not easy to use
3. Concerned about privacy
4. Someone else uses my patient portal on my behalf
5. Can't remember my login or password
6. My health care provider does not offer a portal
7. I worry I may have to pay for it
8. Not aware of patient portals
9. Other

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**All respondents**

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**Q12. Which, if any, of the following would be helpful in using a patient portal?**

**Select all that apply.**

1. Receiving training/tutorial on how to use the portal and features
2. Learning how my information in the portal is kept private and secure
3. None of the above, I don't plan to use a portal
4. None of the above, I am already comfortable using a portal

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**Data Source and Methods**

This National Poll on Healthy Aging report presents findings from a nationally representative household survey conducted exclusively by NORC at the University of Chicago for the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation. National Poll on Healthy Aging surveys are conducted using NORC's AmeriSpeak probability-based panel. This survey module was administered online and via phone in January 2023 to a randomly selected, stratified group of U.S. adults age 50–80 (n=2,563). The sample was subsequently weighted to reflect population figures from the U.S. Census Bureau. The completion rate was 61% among panel members contacted to participate. The margin of error is  $\pm 1$  to 3 percentage points for questions asked of the full sample and higher among subgroups.

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