

Using Email to Communicate with Your UHN Health Care Team

UHN may communicate with you about your care using email. UHN will only use email to communicate with you if you consent (give us permission).

There are some risks to your privacy and security when using email to communicate with others. Know the risks and ways to protect yourself before you agree to use email to communicate with us.

What kind of emails can I expect if I agree to communicate by email?

- UHN will only email you about your health care, such as to:
- send test results
- give you medical advice
- confirm appointments
- ask you to fill out patient surveys
- You can also decide to get information about research studies you may want to participate in.

What information may be included in emails?

The emails we send you may contain personal health information, such as information about your diagnosis, treatment or medications.

- Some clinics may send you a survey by email or text message after an appointment. They use the survey to improve care and the patient experience. Call your health care team before clicking any links if you are unsure what the link is.
- Some physicians and clinics may have their own guidelines as to when they will communicate with patients using email. For example, some clinics may require that you sign a consent form in order to communicate with you by email. Some clinics may limit the types of information they will send by email.

How Does UHN Process information in email communications?

- The email that you send regarding your health care may be forwarded or read by other UHN staff who need the information to provide you with care.
- If any email contains information that is important to your care, it will be copied or summarized into your health record.

What are the risks of using email to communicate with UHN?

- Emails with sensitive information may be difficult to erase or delete.
- Other people may be able to access your emails without you knowing. They may:
 - read, copy or forward your emails
 - take control of your email inbox
- You may get emails meant to look like they are from a trusted source. These fraudulent (fake) emails may be used to:
 - give you a program that damages your computer, tablet or cell phone (malware)
 - get sensitive information about you, such as your usernames, passwords or credit card information (phishing)

Note: You accept the risks to your information and belongings when you agree to use email to communicate with UHN. UHN is not responsible for the security of your internet service providers, email domains, computer, tablet or cell phone or applications (programs) on your devices.

How can I keep my personal health information safe while using email?

- Follow the steps recommended by your electronic services providers to maximize the security of your electronic and web tools.
- Check the “from” email address before replying to an email, clicking any links or opening an email attachment. Confirm the email address is correct.
- Do not open an email attachment you were not expecting to receive. If you are not sure what the attachment is, call the person who sent it to you.

- Use your personal email when communicating with health care providers. Do not use a work email address as your employer may have the right to inspect your work email.
- Use a secure internet connection. Do not use a public internet connection such as at the airport, internet café, public library or other open public area. It may be easier for other people to access your email account and read your personal information without you knowing.

Read [Don't let a phishing attack reel you in](https://www.uhn.ca/corporate/News/Pages/Dont_let_a_phishing_attack_reel_you_in.aspx)

(https://www.uhn.ca/corporate/News/Pages/Dont_let_a_phishing_attack_reel_you_in.aspx) for more information on how to protect your email.

Can I change my mind once I give consent?

You may decide to stop using email to communicate with UHN at any time. Contact your health care provider or call the **UHN Privacy Office at 416 340-4800 extension 6937** if you no longer want to use email to communicate about your care.

What can I do if I get an email I did not consent to?

If you receive an email from UHN where you did not consent to communicate with UHN by email call the UHN Privacy Office.

For more information

For more information about how UHN uses email, please contact the UHN Privacy Office.