How to Protect Your Health Information Online

Steps you can take to protect your health information, including reproductive health information

No matter where you live or receive care, you may wish to limit access to your health information including about reproductive health care services. You can protect your privacy by following the tips below:

1. **Choose not to participate in Health Information Exchange (HIE).** Scripps uses an online portal called Scripps HIE to share medical records with other healthcare providers on your care team. This ensures that all providers can access your health information. This is very helpful, especially in emergencies. Learn more about the Scripps HIE and how to opt out.

    Resources: Acknowledgment of Participation in the Scripps Health Information Exchange (English/Spanish)

2. **Do not post questions or opinions on social media** about pregnancy, missed periods, abortion or abortion providers. This includes platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok. Be cautious about what you share regarding sensitive health topics.

3. **Close your internet browser tabs** after looking at websites that have health information, including about mental health services, substance use disorders, gender affirming care, reproductive health services, abortion, abortion providers and pregnancy termination. After you finish browsing the internet, remember to clear your cookies and browsing history. You should do this on all your devices, including computers, phones and tablets. You can do this in your browser settings.

4. **Remove period tracking apps** from your personal computer and mobile devices. Also, turn off the period tracking feature on health and fitness applications.

5. **Use browsers** like Brave, DuckDuckGo, Firefox, Safari or Tor for better privacy protection.
    *   In your web browser settings, use a search engine like DuckDuckGo, Brave Search, or Startpage.
    *   Connect to the internet using a VPN (virtual private network)

6. **Turn off location services for all apps on your mobile device or tablet.** This will improve your privacy, but it could potentially reduce the features of your apps.

7. **Use secure text messaging apps** like Signal, Telegram or Whatsapp. These apps have end-to-end encryption. They don't store copies of your messages. This provides better security.

8. **Check your MyChart settings.** Review your settings in your online patient portal account to confirm if you have granted proxy access to a relative or partner.
    *   If you've allowed proxy access, you might consider removing this access or disabling the portal account.
    *   You have the option to request that your healthcare provider doesn't include information about your reproductive health in Epic Open Notes.

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9. Pay for your sensitive health care services in cash if you can.
- Details of the services you received will be sent to your health plan if you use health insurance.
- The services you received can be found on the explanation of benefits statement if your health insurance is shared with your parent or spouse.
- In California, you can ask your insurance company to not share certain private services, such as substance use disorder treatment and reproductive health care.

10. Ask your medical group, clinic or hospital how they protect your information. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) gives patients the right to ask healthcare providers and hospitals to limit how their health information is used or shared. Read our Notice of Privacy Practices to learn more.

Contact the Scripps Health Privacy Officer at **1-800-727-4777** with questions.

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